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Meadowlark

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From the Editor

Having Fun

In the world of birding, there's the serious side and there's the fun side. You've been seeing a lot of the serious side in our recent issues, and you'll be seeing more as we prepare to bring you the updated and long-awaited Illinois Ornithological Records Committee report in the Fall issue.

As you have requested in past surveys, we are trying to maintain a balance in *Meadowlark*. With that in mind, this issue focuses, in part, on the fun side of birding.

The editorial staff has put together some stories about big-day birding including a behind-the-scenes look at how six of the state's best birders recorded 184 species of birds in a single day. It's also a venue for the listers out there. And it's a challenge for anyone who thinks they can break the record.

As the migration season closes and the breeding season enters, consider taking the time to stop and smell the roses - er - watch the birds for the pure enjoyment of it.

No listing. No note-taking. No field guides. No cameras. No scopes. No attempts to be the first to find that rare bird.

Just a pair of eyes and your tuned-in senses.

Stand in your backyard, close your eyes, and just enjoy the lilting song of a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Is that White-throated Sparrow really saying, "Old Sam Peabody. Peabody?" Look at the glossy sheen of a Common Grackle. Enjoy the fragrance of a blooming wild lilac as an American Goldfinch descends on a branch.

While we are working to publish data for future researchers, an important goal of IOS, let's not forget that birding is just plain fun, and that enjoying the recreational aspects of birding is also a goal of this organization.

Indulge your senses and enjoy your hobby.

Sheryl DeVore

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President's Message

This season of the year is considered by many the dullest time of the year. I argue that it is not. The breeding season is quite interesting and from a birding perspective the most important. Without successful breeding, populations will decline and the most exciting times (i.e., migration) will not be as enjoyable. If you do not bird during this period, consider starting this year. See how many birds you can find breeding in your neighborhood. Attempt to determine their breeding status by observing their behavior.

Summer is also a good time to introduce a new person to birding. The adult birds are still in full bright plumage and easily observed. Take a friend or youngster birding. Your introduction just might hook someone into a life long hobby.

You may even want to bring them to our Annual Meeting at Starved Rock State Park (June 19 - 21). This park has unique habitats which, in turn, attract uncommon breeding birds. We will be exploring these habitats on our field trips. You can gain new skills and make new or renew old friendships.

New birders are welcome.

Another way to ensure we have ample birds to observe year-round is to join the Teaming With Wildlife Team. You can help by promoting the passage of this important funding initiative, which will focus on preventive management that could keep species from becoming eligible for the endangered species list.

If you want to know more about any of this, please let me or one of our officers know. We're here to help and inform. Good Birding

Bob Montgomery

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Articles

Sabine's Gull in the Middlewestern Prairie Region 2
— Kenneth J. Brock

Birds of the Prairie Ridge State Natural Area 8
— Jeffery W. Walk

Birding Olympics

Illinois Birding Big Days Provide Challenge for the Obsessed 12
— Christine Williamson

Breaking the State Big Day Record 16
— David P. Mandell

Southern Illinois Team Garners 101 Species on Hot July Day 20
— Rhonda S. Monroe

DuPage County Team Sets New Big Day Record 21
—Joe Suchecki

IOS REDS Team Sets Another Lake County Big Day Record 22
—Sheryl De Vore

Departments

Seasonal Highlights —
Breeding Season 24

Field Notes —
Breeding Season 28
— Vernon Kleen

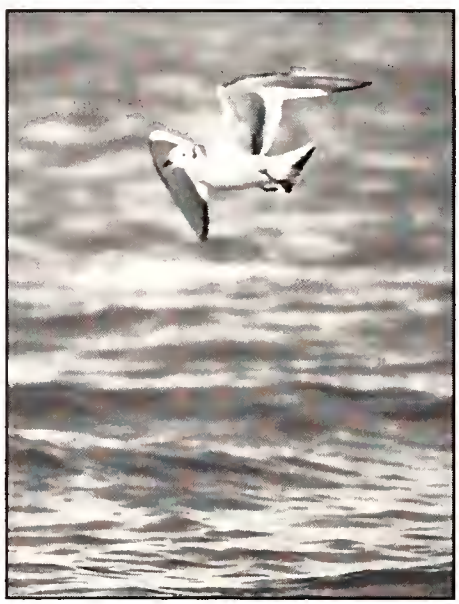
About Our Cover:

Henslow's Sparrow drawing by Denis Kania. At least 28 territorial male Henslow's Sparrows were detected in Johnson County, Illinois, during the 1997 breeding season. See seasonal highlights for more information.

Sabine's Gull
in the Middlewestern Prairie Region

by Kenneth J. Brock

Some birds are beautiful and others rare, but in the Midwest these characters are shared by precious few species. One such bird is Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*). This elegant bird blends these two qualities in a manner that renders each sighting a delightful experience. Indeed, I still vividly recall my first Sabine's Gull.



Sabine's Gull photo taken on 14 Sept. 1997 at Carlyle Lake, Clinton Co. by Albert Seppi.

It appeared on one of those raw mid-October days when Lake Michigan's steel-edged winds bring tears to your eyes; the date was 14 October 1978. A group of deeply chilled birders was watching from Indiana's Miller Beach parking lot at Lake Street. We huddled in the sparse shelter of a parked van while debating whether any site on earth was colder than the Lake Michigan shoreline. Suddenly, Ed Hopkins shouted and frantically pointed eastward. There, slowly working toward us, laboring against the gale, was a juvenile Sabine's Gull. The bird was just above the water at the outer edge of the breakers, perhaps 100 meters offshore. Its striking dark plumage was highlighted by dazzling white triangles on the upper wings. No one spoke as the gull, which appeared to have just flown out of the field guide, worked slowly westward past the lot. Departure of the bird was celebrated with a resounding cheer, and the cold was not mentioned again.

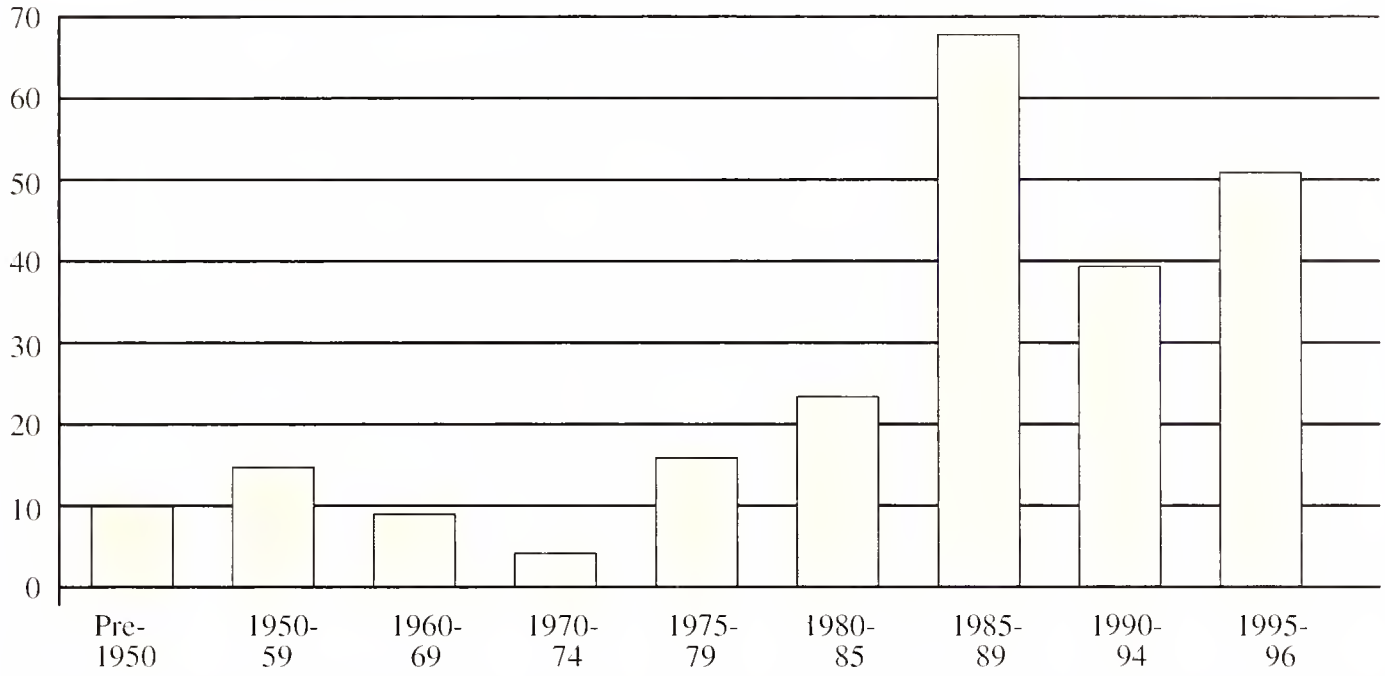
Fortunately for Midwestern birders, annual counts of this small gull have increased dramatically in recent decades. Indeed, over the past century the status of Sabine's Gull has evolved from an accidental visitor to a rare but regular transient. This paper summarizes the historical and modern status of Sabine's Gull in the Middlewestern Prairie Region (an area that encompasses Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, plus most of Kentucky and Ohio). Data for this study were extracted from *American Birds*, *The National Audubon Society Field Notes*, local publications, and the major state ornithological works.

To evaluate temporal data, each month was divided into three 10-day increments, providing 36 time units (adjustments to the 10-day pattern were made in the final unit of months that contains other than 30 days). Lingering birds were recorded for each time unit in which they were observed; consequently, the totals employed in this summary are slightly greater than the actual number of records.

The Sabine's Explosion

The Region's first Sabine's Gull was recorded near Chicago on 1 April 1873; Bohlen (1989) describes this poignant event in detail. This is a surprising date as only one other Sabine's Gull has ever been reported in April; that was the remarkable bird that wintered on the Ohio lakefront (Rosche & Hannikman, 1989). Subsequent Sabine's Gull occurrences in the Region were slow in coming. By the turn of the century only two additional birds were logged (both in Iowa), and by 1950 only 10 Sabine's Gulls had been recorded. The rate of occurrence over the past century is illustrated in Figure I which reveals an abrupt increase in Sabine's Gull reports during the late 1980s. Remarkably, almost as many birds were seen between 1985 and 1989 as in all previous years combined. The best single year was 1995 when a phenomenal 35 Sabine's were counted across the Region. The increased number of Sabine's Gull in recent decades is attributed, at least in part, to much greater and more efficient observer effort. During fall migration, today's birders regularly check locations that have been productive in previous years. Indeed, H. David Bohlen (pers. comm.) reports that the larger central Illinois lakes are checked daily during the migration period.

Figure I. The number of Sabine's Gulls observed in the Middlewestern Prairie Region 1873-1996. A spectacular increase in the observation rate occured in the late 1980s. Note that the time intervals are not all of equal duration.

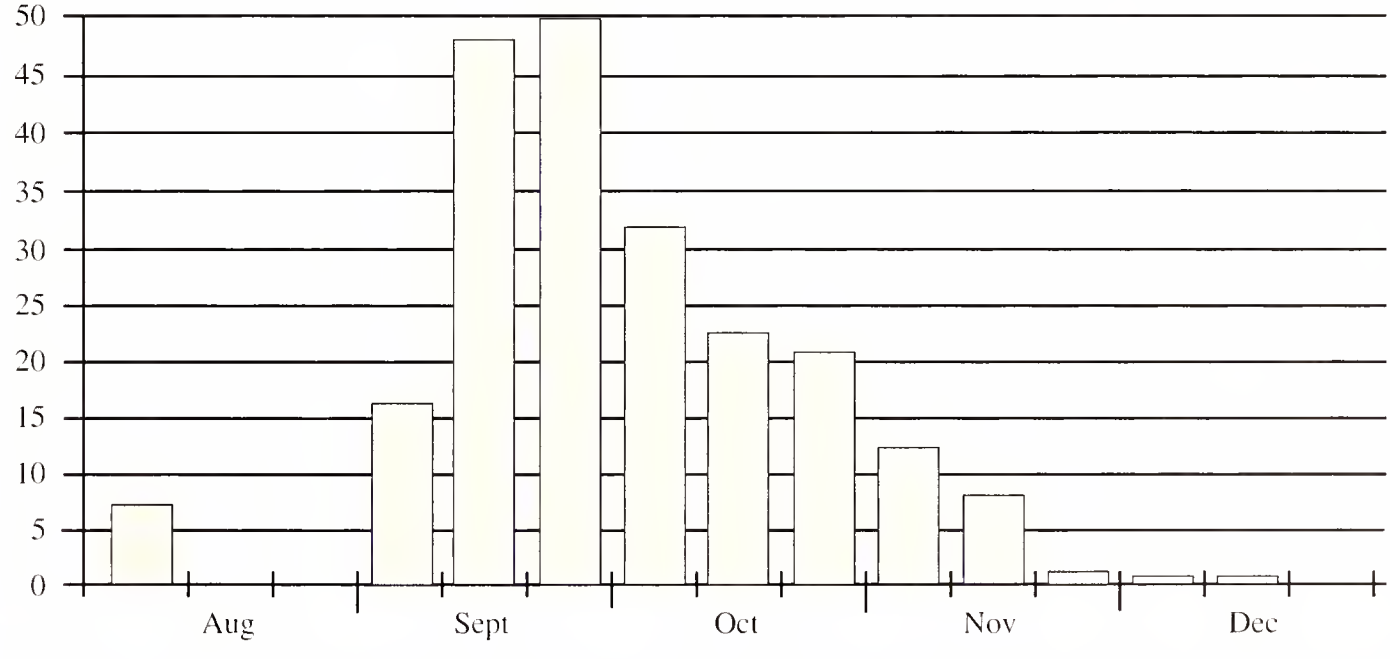


The Fall Flight

The Sabine's Gull migration is relegated to the months of September, October, and November. Other than the famous wintering Ohio bird, only six Sabine's Gulls have been recorded outside this three-month interval: two birds in December plus singletons in January, April, July, and August. Figure II, which shows the temporal distribution of Sabine's Gulls during the fall flight, reveals that migration begins abruptly in mid-September and peaks before the end of the month. The flight then gradually tails off into December.

Migration envelopes (Brock 1986) provide a method for quantifying the migration. In this approach it is assumed that bird migration can be described by a statis-

Figure II. Sabine's Gull numbers per 10-day interval during the fall migration period. Virtually all records are restricted to September, October, and November. The migration peak occurs in the last third of September.



tical distribution, perhaps similar to the familiar bell-shaped curve. Using observational data, a computer calculates the area under the curve and determines critical dates that define the envelope. The fall Sabine's Gull migration envelope is:

	All records
EARLIEST	3 Aug 89
ARRIVE	12 Sep
PEAK	10 Oct
DEPART	3 Nov
LATEST	12 Dec 54
N	153

The critical envelope dates are based on the area under the curve. The ARRIVE date marks the first 10% of the migration and by the DEPART date 90% of the birds have passed. Thus, 80 percent of Sabine's Gulls pass through the Region during the 53 days between 12 September and 3 November. Midpoint of the envelope area is 1 October, suggesting that this date is near the flight peak. The computer calculation was based on 153 records (N).

An alternate assessment of the Sabine's Gull migration is provided by examining maximum daily count dates. The Region's record single-day count consists of eight birds (a flock of seven juveniles and one adult), that were seen at Huron, Ohio, on 15 September 1984 (Peterjohn 1989). In addition, an incredible seven Sabine's Gulls have been recorded in central Illinois on three different occasions: 23 September 1986 at Carlyle Lake (AB 41:96), 18 September 1988 at Lake Springfield (Bohlen 1989), and 17 September 1995 at Carlyle Lake (AFN 50:63). The graphical, migration envelope, and maximum count approaches all suggest that, on average, the fall flight peaks between 17 September and 1 October.

The Inland Invasion

It was traditionally believed that most Sabine's Gulls occur on the Great Lakes. Observational data, however, reveal that this is not true in the Middlewestern Prairie Region. Of the 237 birds tabulated in this study, 126 were recorded at inland locations and only 111 on the Great Lakes. The geographic distribution of these birds by state is given in Table 1 below.

These data reveal that in Illinois four Sabine's Gulls are seen downstate for every one along the shores of Lake Michigan. It is not surprising, therefore, that two central Illinois locations are among the top four Sabine's Gull sites in the Region (see Table 2).

Although Gary, Indiana, at Lake Michigan's southern tip, currently boasts the largest total, based on current observation rates Carlyle Lake will claim the title in the near future. In the last six years only nine Sabine's Gulls were recorded in Gary, whereas 16 were logged on Carlyle Lake.

An explanation for the rise in inland Sabine's Gull numbers was provided by Binford and Johnson (1995), who noted that the availability of reservoirs has increased reports of pelagic species throughout inland North America. Quite clearly reservoirs have become the dominant contributor to the Region's Sabine's Gull counts in recent decades.

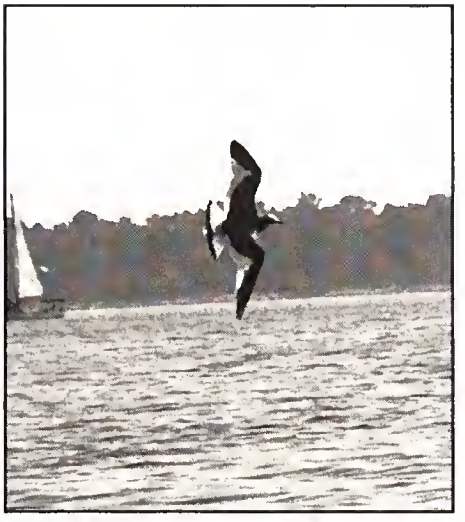
Table 1.
Distribution of Great Lakes and Inland Sabine's Gulls by State

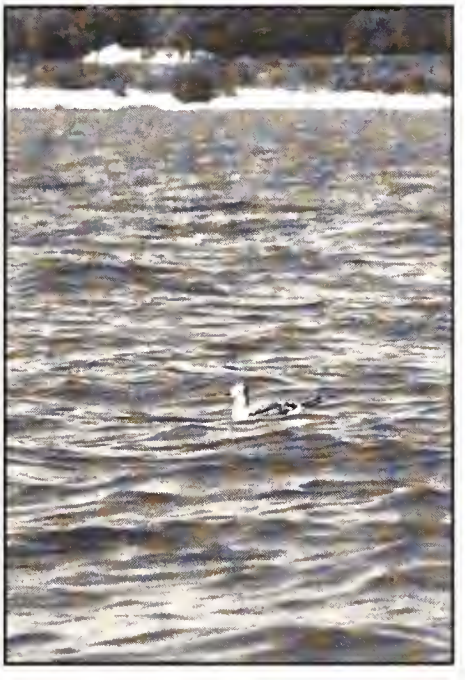
	Great Lakes	Inland	Total
Illinois	17	75	92
Indiana	42	7	49
Iowa	–	28	28
Kentucky	–	4	4
Missouri	–	6	6
Ohio	51	6	57
unspecified	1	0	1
Totals	111	126	237

Table 2. The Ten Middlewesteren Prairie Region Sites with the Most Recorded Sabine's Gulls

Location	State	Total	Comments
Gary	IN	31	Lake Michigan
Carlyle Lake	IL	26	Inland
Cleveland	OH	16	Lake Erie
Springfield	IL	10	Inland
Lorain	OH	10	Lake Erie
Saylorville Res.	IA	9	Inland
Michigan City Harbor	IN	9	Lake Michigan
Huron	OH	8	Lake Erie
Chicago	IL	8	Lake Michigan
Blackhawk Lake	IA	8	Inland

However, two intriguing questions remain unanswered: 1) why do the central Illinois reservoirs attract more Sabine's Gulls than the Great Lakes (Table 1 reveals that both Indiana and Ohio have far more Sabine's Gulls on the Great Lakes than at inland sites); and 2) why do central Illinois impoundments produce more birds than reservoirs in other Midwestern states? Little evidence is available upon which to formulate answers; however, several ideas have emerged. In addressing the first question Keith McMullen (pers. comm.) hypothesized that lake size is an important factor, noting that Sabine's Gulls can easily be missed on the Great Lakes, whereas, all portions of the inland reservoirs are within telescope view. Thus, there may actually be more Sabine's Gulls on the Great Lakes, but most remain too far from shore to be seen; this species is more pelagic than most gulls. Dan Kassebaum (pers. comm.) explains the high Sabine's Gull concentration in central Illinois by proposing that this area lies on a regular flyway. Also, Sabine's Gulls might occur regularly on all large Midwestern reservoirs, but birders outside Illinois fail to detect them regularly.





Sabine's Gull photos taken on 14 Sept. 1997 at Carlyle Lake, Clinton Co. by Albert Seppi.

Interestingly, as first noted by Bohlen (1989), Sabine's Gull movement through the inland reservoirs precedes the Great Lakes flight. Migration envelopes for the two areas are as follows:

	Inland	Great Lakes
EARLIEST	3 Aug 89	2 Sept 95
ARRIVE	12 Sep	13 Sep
PEAK	27 Sept	14 Oct
DEPART	22 Oct	10 Nov
LATEST	23 Nov 79	12 Dec 54
N	92	61

If we disregard the earliest reports, the birds apparently arrive in both areas about the same time. The Great Lakes peak, however, is more than two weeks after the inland peak. In addition, Sabine's Gulls linger almost three weeks later on the Great Lakes than on inland reservoirs (compare departure dates). This delayed Great Lakes flight seems to support the McMullen hypothesis, suggesting that unseen birds linger on the Great Lakes until autumn gales, which intensify in October, drive them toward shore (where they are sometimes seen) and ultimately southward.

The Wintering Ohio Bird

Perhaps the Region's single most extraordinary Sabine's Gull was an immature that wintered on the Lake Erie waterfront. During the winter of 1988-1989 (and following summer) this bird was seen regularly along the Cleveland - Lorain lakefront (Rosche & Hannikman, 1989). Most Sabine's Gulls winter at sea off the western coasts of Africa and South America, and virtually all depart the northern latitudes by early December. Consequently, the lingering Lake Erie bird may well represent the first documented record of a winter-period Sabine's Gull in the northern hemisphere. The lengthy visit of this bird also provided observers a rare opportunity to study the first-winter plumage and molt cycle of this maritime species (excellent photographs are included in Rosche & Hannikman, 1989).

Ages of Middlewestern Birds

Nine out of ten Midwestern Sabine's Gulls have been in juvenile plumage. Of the birds aged in this study, 98 were juveniles and only 13 were adults. Based on the migration patterns of other Arctic-nesting species, adult Sabine's Gulls probably move southward before the juveniles; however, the low number of adults precludes a quantitative comparison. The earliest reported adult was 6 September 1995 at the Rice Lake Conservation Area, IL (Meadowlark 5:74) and the latest was 4 November 1989 at Lake Monroe, IN (AB 44:99). Disregarding the wintering Ohio bird, extreme dates for juveniles are 3 August 1989 at Decatur, IL (AB 44:99) and 12 December 1954 at Gary, IN (Brock 1986).

How to see a Sabine's Gull

To find one of these natty birds in the Midwest, first mark your calendar for several September and October trips. If at all possible, start your search during the last half of September. Make every effort to be afield during, or immediately following, passage of a cold front, as many birds appear on northerly winds behind these fronts.

Birders searching the central Illinois lakes would be well–advised to keep close tabs on the Central Illinois Rare Bird alert (217) 785-1083. Techniques for birding these remarkably productive impoundments vary with location. On Lake Springfield, H. David Bohlen (pers. comm.) searches for birds displaying the Sabine's characteristic tern-like flight. He also notes that this species often executes short flights from a floating position, followed by an arching descent back to the water. Robert Chapel (pers. comm.) reports having found Sabine's Gulls resting on sand spits with other gulls or in association with shorebirds in shallow water or on mud flats.

Finding Sabine's Gulls on enormous Carlyle Lake requires special techniques. Dan Kassebaum (pers. comm.) has developed the following strategy for locating Sabine's Gulls on the lake. Observations over several years reveal that most birds remain near the center of the lake; frequently between the Allen Branch boat launch (west shore) and Coles Creek (east shore). At this location the birds are at least a mile from the nearest shore; thus, a good telescope is essential. Dan begins serious searching during the second week of September; he uses the numerous Ring-billed Gulls for a size comparison and to aid in locating gull–feeding areas. Typical Sabine's Gull behaviors include long periods of resting on the water (rendering them almost impossible to see), feeding in a large circular pattern over the lake's center, executing quick flights across the water, and suddenly dropping to the water by executing a lateral turn into a dive (often revealing the upperpart pattern). Dan also notes that the gulls are more easily seen when boaters are most active. For optimal viewing, he recommends South Shore State Park in the morning and Hazlet State Park in the afternoon.

Weather is the single most critical factor for finding Sabine's Gulls on Lake Michigan; the great majority of sightings are associated with cold fronts. Accordingly, your best bet is to head for Lake Michigan during the passage of a front, find a sheltered area, and simply watch the lake (be sure to dress warmly). Your chances are better if you watch from an eastern or southern shore, as northwest winds typically drift south-bound birds to the eastern margin of the lake. These vigils, of course, can also be rewarded by the sighting of a passing jaeger or Little Gull (*Larus minutus*).

Figure III:
The characteristic appearance of a flying juvenile Sabine's Gull. Most birds appear uniformly dark above, with bold white triangles on trailing edges of the wings.

On Indiana's lakefront Sabine's Gulls are most frequently seen flying westward along the shoreline. They typically fly low over the water near shore. Most sightings involve singletons, but almost one-third of the records involve multiple birds (occasionally in small flocks, but more often several birds over several hours). The Indiana record is four (23 September 1990, at Miller Beach, AB 45:111), but three birds have been logged on five different occasions. Lake Michigan Sabine's Gulls almost never land, and they rarely associate with other gulls.

Regardless of where you find a Sabine's Gull, it will almost certainly be a juvenile, similar to the individual shown in Figure III. On the gray overcast days that typically follow autumn cold fronts, these birds look like dark Franklin's-sized gulls, with distinctive white triangles on the inner upperwings. Contrast between the black primaries and brown mantle is usually not evident; they simply look like dark-backed gulls with white wing triangles. The most similar birds are juvenile Black-legged Kittiwakes (*Rissa tridactyla*), and Little Gulls. Both of these, however, normally display the bold, "W" upperpart pattern, rather than the seemingly uniformly dark primaries, upperwing coverts, and mantle.

Addendum

As this artiele approaehed completion in September 1997, it beeame apparent that an extraordinary Sabine's Gull flight was underway. Every Rare Bird Alert in the eountry seem to include Sabine's Gulls and even an international report filtered in; an exceptional movement off the British Isles was posted on the World Wide Web. Aecordingly, the deeision was made to delay publieation until after the fall season. In retrospeet this proved to be a wise ehoiee as a reeord 41 Sabine's Gulls were logged in the Middlewestern Prairie Region during fall 1997. This addendum summarizes details of the outstanding 1997–98 flight.

Amazingly, the vanguard of the Region's Sabine's Gull migration appeared in mid-summer; Lee Schoenewe diseovered a bird, believed to be in seeond–alternate plumage, at Kettleson Wildlife Management Area, Iowa on 8 July. This overzealous Sabine's (only the Region's second July reeord) was soon followed by an immature, seen in Deeatur on 19 August by Myrna Deaton, whieh provided only the seeond August reeord.

As antieipated, Sabine's Gull aetivity inereased substantially in September. On 3 September, Jeff McCoy identified an immature at Miller Beaeh, to establish a reeord early arrival date for Indiana. Throughout September, Miller Beaeh was the Region's Sabine's Gull "hot spot" with an unpreeedented number of reports that ineluded eight birds on 10 September (Dave Mandell, Bob Hughes, and John White). The latter eount provided an all-time daily high for Indiana. Away from Lake Miehigan the season's best tally was logged at Carlyle Lake, where Dan Kassebaum eounted five on 5 October. The following tabulation summarizes the Region's 1997 Sabine's Gull flight.

State	Number observed	Comment
Indiana	23	All at Miller Beach in September
Illinois	14	13 inland and one on Lake Michigan
Iowa	2	Saylorville & Coralville Reservoirs
Ohio	2	Both on Lake Erie

The reeord 1997 migration differed somewhat from the established pattern as a majority of the Sabine's Gulls (26) appeared on the Great Lakes. Temporal distribution of the season's 41 birds was as follows: July–1, August–1, September–29, and October–10. The last Sabine's Gull was reported on 25 October at Huron, Ohio (Joe Hammond fide Nick Barber). Of the aged birds, 14 were immatures, one was adult, and one was in first–year plumage.

The 1997 Sabine's Gull flight teaehes us that although we have acquired much knowledge about the passage of these elegant gulls through the Midwest, we elearly have more to learn.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to H. David Bohlen, Robert Chapel, and Keith McMullen, all of whom shared their thoughts and Sabine's Gull experienees on the eentral Illinois lakes. Speeial thanks go to Dan Kassebaum who provided the details of his Sabine's-finding strategy for Carlyle Lake. Laurie Binford read a draft of the paper and made many extremely helpful suggestions for improvement.

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—Kenneth J. Brock
Indiana University Northwest
Gary, IN

Birds of Prairie Ridge State Natural Area

by Jeffery W. Walk

Introduction

Since January 1994, I have been conducting research on birds at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area (formerly the Prairie–Chicken Sanctuaries), Jasper and Marion Counties. Here I present a summary of these records through 1996. Fields of cool–season and warm–season grasses, as well as four newly created wetlands, are managed to provide habitat for area–sensitive, threatened, and endangered species native to Illinois' prairies and marshes. Several bird species were documented on the natural area for the first time during this study, in addition to species found in previous years.

Marsh Wren drawing by Brian K. Willis.

Methods

Most of the observations of grassland birds were incidental to my 400 m transect counts conducted in May and June 1995 and 1996 during the early morning hours (0530–0900) (Jasper County only). These transects were surveyed to determine the relative abundances of Dickcissels, Eastern Meadowlarks, Grasshopper Sparrows, Field Sparrows, and Henslow's Sparrows in different management units. Areas in Marion County and those not surveyed by transects in Jasper County were walked periodically, but at least once each season to document other species present. Wetlands were surveyed weekly from May through August by walking the perimeter of each and recording species and numbers of individuals of each species present. Wetlands were surveyed once or twice monthly from February to May and September to November.

Results

A total of 222 species was observed on the site over this period, including those observed on Newton Lake, which was surveyed only occasionally and is immediately adjacent to portions of the Jasper County area. Considering only the grassland, wetland, and shrubland habitats (i.e. excluding the few small forested areas adjacent to Newton Lake as well as the lake), 145 species were recorded, including 16 endangered and 5 threatened species (Appendix A). Fifty–

two of those species were known to breed on the site, including 7 endangered and 2 threatened (IESPB 1994).

The wetlands surveyed were created in 1994 and 1995, so the surrounding vegetation was poorly developed. Nevertheless, four state–listed species were recorded on them in 1995 during spring migration: one American Bittern, an adult and an immature Yellow–crowned Night–Heron, an immature Black–crowned Night–Heron, and two Black Terns. At least four pairs of King Rails bred in Jasper County in 1995, based on brood observations.

In 1996, state–listed migrants included an immature Yellow–crowned Night–Heron, two Black Terns, two Great Egrets, an adult and a "calico" immature Little Blue Heron, and a Wilson's Phalarope. A vagrant Purple Sandpiper was observed in Marion County on 15 May 1996. One pair of American Bitterns and at least six pairs of King Rails nested in Jasper County in 1996. One pair of Least Bitterns was observed in Marion County in July, but no nest or juveniles were found. Nesting Mallards were common in both counties in both years and a young brood of Blue–winged Teal was observed in Marion County in 1996. Dozens of species of waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as Soras and Virginia Rails were observed as migrants on the wetlands.

Herkert et al. (1993) listed 10 Illinois prairie birds as highly or moderately sensitive to grassland fragmentation. This is the only site in Illinois where all 10 can be found, and 8 of the 10 have been documented as breeding species.

Throughout the grasslands during summer, Red–winged Blackbirds, Common Yellowthroats, Field Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Grasshopper Sparrows, American Goldfinches, Dickcissels, and Eastern Meadowlarks were common to abundant. Sedge Wrens are quite abundant on the grassland areas once they arrive, typically in late June. Sedge Wrens breed on the site. Most nests found are "dummy nests," so it is unclear what proportion of these late–arriving birds actually breed.

The Western Meadowlark is a rare winter resident, and a single male was recorded throughout June and July of 1995, but breeding was not confirmed. The Bobolink is a common migrant, and territorial males remain until about 10 June each spring before leaving. A predated nest bowl, possibly a Bobolink's, was found in 1996. Jasper County is at the extreme of breeding range for both Western Meadowlarks (Applegate and Willms 1987) and Bobolinks (Bohlen 1989).

Besides the aforementioned and relatively common fragmentation–sensitive Eastern Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Sedge Wren, Savannah Sparrows are found in low numbers each year (3 to 6 pairs) in Jasper County, which again is at the extreme southern edge of the species' breeding range (Bohlen 1989). Eight and 10 pairs of Upland Sandpipers were recorded in 1995 and 1996, respectively. About 45 Northern Harrier nests have been located since 1990 at Prairie Ridge SNA. Eight nests were found in 1995 and 4 in 1996. Henslow's Sparrows have been present yearly since at least 1994. Thirty–three displaying males were documented in 1995, increasing to 41 males in 1996. The number of Greater Prairie–Chickens has increased following translocations since 1993 for genetic and demographic enhancement. The estimated fall 1996 population was about 200 birds (pers. obs.).

Two species of endangered grassland owls breed on the area. Short–eared Owls were not recorded nesting in 1995 or 1996, but 16 nests have been found since 1990. A pair of Barn Owls nested at one location in 1995 and 1996.

In the shrubby areas, three notable species were recorded. Seven pairs of Bell's Vireos and five pairs of Blue Grosbeaks were found in 1996 in Jasper County. Loggerhead Shrikes are fairly common in both Jasper County and Marion County and are frequently found nesting in yards. My roadside shrike survey in Jasper County yielded at least 12 pairs along the roadsides of 19 square miles encompassing the Jasper County grasslands from 1994–1996.

Table 1. Estimated breeding populations (pairs) of some species at the Jasper County unit of Prairie Ridge State Natural Area.

Species	1995	1996
Dickcissel	300*	350*
Eastern Meadowlark	200*	175*
Field Sparrow	100*	85*
Grasshopper Sparrow	120*	90*
Greater Prairie–Chicken, *endangered*	41	65
Henslow's Sparrow, *endangered*	33	41
King Rail, *threatened*	4	6
Loggerhead Shrike, *threatened*	13	12
Northern Harrier, *endangered*	7	3
Sedge Wren	150*	150*
Upland Sandpiper, *endangered*	5	7

* represents estimates based on transect censuses—other species measured by direct censuses.

Discussion

Besides the diversity of prairie birds, their abundance at Prairie Ridge SNA is noteworthy. Table 1 shows the estimated numbers of some breeding bird species found in Jasper County that might be regarded as large or significant for the state. The success of this area in providing habitat for Illinois' area-sensitive, threatened, and endangered species has been great in spite of the relatively small area being managed (about 2,100 acres in 16 separate tracts).

In Illinois, grassland birds have declined 75–95% over the past 25 years (Herkert 1991). All public and private efforts to halt these declines warrant support. Areas such as Goose Lake Prairie and Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie have received considerable attention for their outstanding populations of grassland birds. Perhaps due in part to their isolation in southeastern Illinois, and the area's lack of observers, Prairie Ridge State Natural Area has not been fully appreciated for its grassland bird density and diversity.

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Appendix A. Birds Of Open Habitats Of Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, Jasper and Marion Counties (1994–1996)

Podicipediformes		
Pied-billed Grebe (T)		
Ciconiiformes		
Great Blue Heron	Little Blue Heron (E)	Green Heron
Cattle Egret	Great Egret (T)	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (T)
Black-crowned Night-Heron (E)	*?Least Bittern (E)	*American Bittern (E)
Anseriformes		
Canada Goose	Snow Goose	*Mallard
Black Duck	Gadwall	Northern Pintail
Green-winged Teal	*Blue-winged Teal	American Wigeon
Northern Shoveler	Wood Duck	Ring-necked duck
Canvasback	Lesser Scaup	Ruddy Duck
Hooded Merganser		
Falconiformes		
*Turkey Vulture	Sharp-shinned Hawk (E)	Cooper's Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk	Rough-legged Hawk	*Northern Harrier (E)
Osprey (E)	*American Kestrel	
Galliformes		
Greater Prairie-Chicken (E)	*Northern Bobwhite	*Ring-necked Pheasant
Gruiformes		
King Rail (T)	Virginia Rail	Sora
American Coot		
Charadriiformes		
Killdeer	Lesser Golden Plover	*Upland Sandpiper (E)
Greater Yellowlegs	Lesser Yellowlegs	Solitary Sandpiper
Spotted Sandpiper	Wilson's Phalarope (E)	*American Woodcock
Common Snipe	Short-billed Dowitcher	Semipalmated Sandpiper

***Charadriiformes**, continued*		
Least Sandpiper	Baird's Sandpiper	Pectoral Sandpiper
Purple Sandpiper	Dunlin	Stilt Sandpiper
Ring–billed Gull	Black Tern (E)	
Columbiformes		
*Rock Dove	*Mourning Dove	
Cuculiformes		
Yellow–billed Cuckoo	Black–billed Cuckoo	
Strigiformes		
*Barn Owl (E)	Great Horned Owl	*Short–eared Owl (E)
Caprimulgiformes		
Common Nighthawk		
Apodiformes		
Chimney Swift	Ruby–throated Hummingbird	
Piciformes		
Northern Flicker	*Red–headed Woodpecker	Downy Woodpecker
Passeriformes		
Eastern Kingbird	*Horned Lark	Tree Swallow
Bank Swallow	Rough–winged Swallow	*Barn Swallow
Cliff Swallow	Purple Martin	Blue Jay
American Crow	Tufted Titmouse	*House Wren
Carolina Wren	Marsh Wren	*Sedge Wren
*Northern Mockingbird	*Gray Catbird	*Brown Thrasher
*American Robin	*Eastern Bluebird	Water Pipit
Cedar Waxwing	*Loggerhead Shrike (T)	*European Starling
*White–eyed Vireo	*Bell's Vireo	*Warbling Vireo
*Yellow Warbler	Yellow–rumped Warbler	Prairie Warbler
Palm Warbler	*Common Yellowthroat	*Yellow–breasted Chat
*House Sparrow	Bobolink	*Eastern Meadowlark
*?Western Meadowlark	*Red–winged Blackbird	Orchard Oriole
*Baltimore Oriole	*Common Grackle	*Brown–headed Cowbird
*Northern Cardinal	*Blue Grosbeak	*Indigo Bunting
*Dickcissel	House Finch	*American Goldfinch
*Eastern Towhee	*Savannah Sparrow	*Grasshopper Sparrow
*Henslow's Sparrow (E)	LeConte's Sparrow	Nelson's Sharp–tailed Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow	Lark Sparrow	Dark–eyed Junco
American Tree Sparrow	Chipping Sparrow	*Field Sparrow
White–crowned Sparrow	White–throated Sparrow	Swamp Sparrow
*Song Sparrow	Lapland Longspur	Smith's Longspur

The following species have been recorded by other observers during or before to this study:

Northern Goshawk	Merlin	Sandhill Crane (E)
Yellow Rail (E)	Common Moorhen (E)	Burrowing Owl

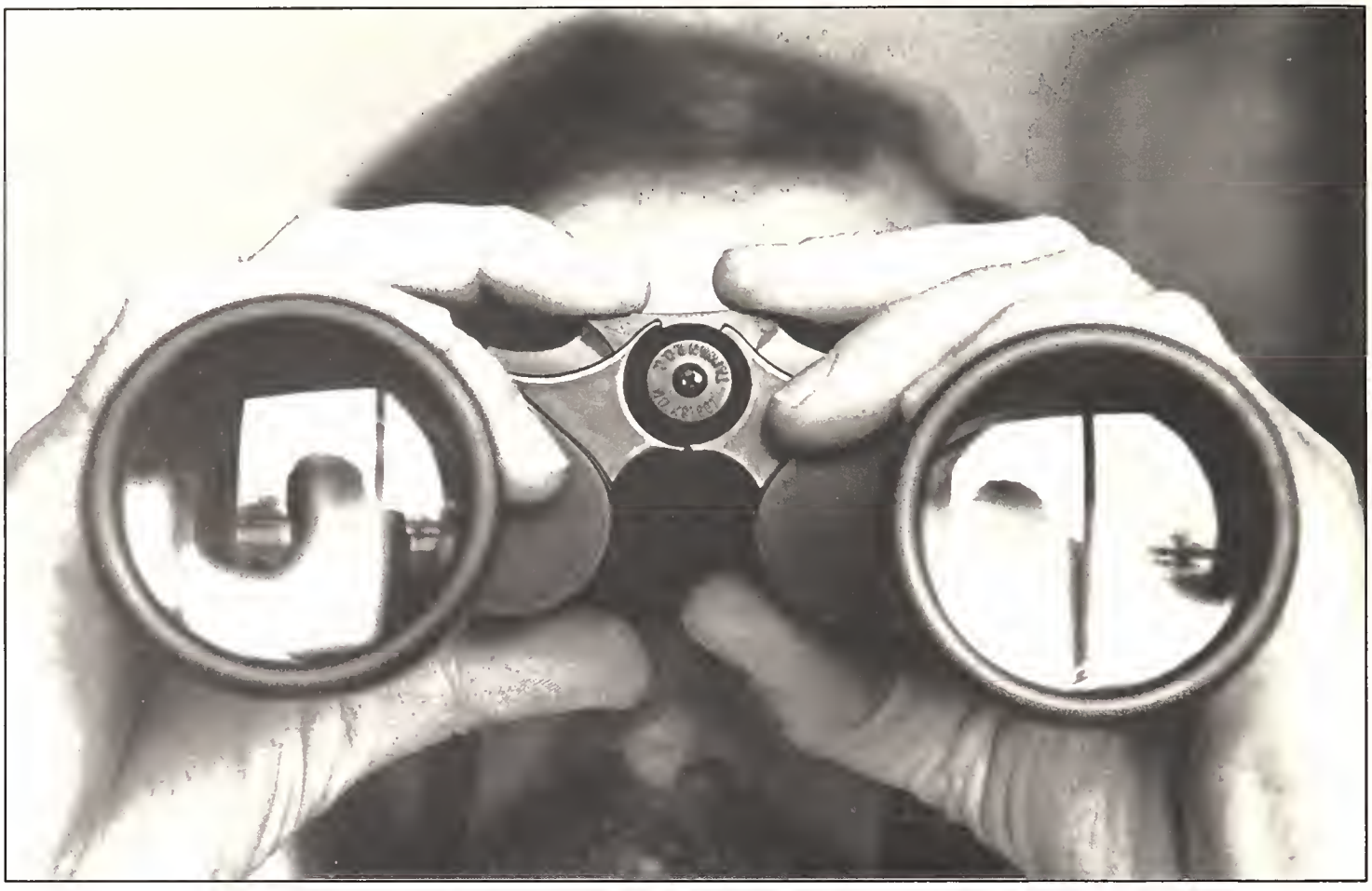
TOTAL SPECIES: 145
Breeding: [54]

Illinois Threatened: 5 Breeding: 2
Illinois Endangered: 16 Breeding: 7

KEY:

E –Endangered in Illinois **T** –Threatened in Illinois

* –Breeding Species *? –Probable Breeding, but Unconfirmed



Illinois Birding Big Days Provide Challenge for the Obsessed

by Christine Williamson

There comes a point in every birder's life when the concept of "big" enters the mind. As if birding weren't intrinsically capricious and intensely frustrating enough, birders tend to put more obstacles in their paths. After a certain point in a birding life, when all of the common species, the regular nesters, the expected migrants, and the post-breeding wanderers have been ticked off a list in the home region, birders concoct new challenges. These often take the form of a Big Day Contest.

These contests set physical and time parameters, challenging a birder or a team to locate and identify by sight and sound as many bird species as possible. The classic contests prescribe a geographic area and set birders loose there for a given amount of time to pit strategy, route planning, advance scouting, and identification skills against weather, the vagaries of bird migration, traffic, exhaustion, and sensory overload.

Imagination is the only limit to the types of big days that can be done. There are Big Days, Big Months, Big Years, Big County Years, Single Site Big Years, Big Sites (species identified from a sitting position in one location). Some birders pick a family group and concentrate a Big Year or Day ticking off species in the bird family. Most of these site and geographically restricted events are also split up by some contestants by bird family groups.

A few birders don't restrict their geographic area. A notable example is a British Airways flight attendant who logged thousands of miles and thousands of birds in a round-the-world Big Year several years ago that was made significantly easier by the nature of his job.

Fund raising

Big contests are often associated with fund raising. Bob Chapel and Elizabeth Chato recorded 150 species in total in central Illinois on 11

May 1996 and raised more than $1,300 for the S. Charles Kendreigh scholarship fund for avian research. The Chicago Audubon Society has held a Spring Big Day Birdathon regularly to raise cash for its activities. A Lake County team comprised of Sheryl DeVore, Renee Baade, David Johnson, and Eric Walters raised $500 in 1996 for the Illinois Audubon Society Sanctuary Fund. In 1997, Johnson, Baade, and De Vore raised $500 for the Illinois Ornithological Society.

Some Big Events are simply the product of a feverish birder's mind, obsessed with breaking some record or even of creating a big category no one ever thought of before. Many of these contests are conducted alone, one birder against time and the elements.

Big Day syndrome

Illinois seems especially prone to the Big Syndrome. Located away from an ocean and without much elevation, with most of its natural landscape altered by agriculture and development, Illinois birding can be frustrating after most of the regular migrants and breeders have been ticked off a state list.

It has taken all of the top ten listers in the state at least 15 years to build a statewide bird list over 365 (the Illinois Ornithological Records Committee is compiling an updated list totaling more than 400, so there's another challenge for birders).

Landlocked Illinois birders have turned to big contests for at least 45 years. Early birders, such as Chicago's famous William Dreuth, must have devised big contests of some kind to amuse themselves in the 1920s and 1930s. But the first published record of an Illinois Big Day was 24 May 1952 when Charlie Clark, Laurie Binford, and T. Kemper logged 139 species in northern Illinois. Binford and Clark experimented with Big Days throughout the 1960s and 1970s in all seasons of the year with totals that have been fairly difficult to beat. Their summer Big Day totals of 87 in northern Illinois on 21 July 1983 and 81 on 7 August 1966 were not beaten until 12 June 1994 by Alan Branhagen and J. Donaldson. A Binford-Clark-Westcott Fall Big Day with 115 birds counted on 6 September 1965 was only beaten 27 September 1991 with a 129 species day total from Walter Marcisz, Wes Serafin, and Eric Walters. Clark, Binford, and Westcott still hold the Winter Big Day record with 66 species secn 4 January 1964. A challenge awaits!

While few Illinois Big Day records exist from the 1970s, Illinois birders seemed to have been badly infected by the big bug in the 1980s. The bug seems be the most virulent in spring. From the mid-1980s onward, a central Illinois team, anchored by Dave Bohlen and Vernon Kleen, scoured the Sangamon and Illinois River valleys religiously every May. Other central Illinois teams popped up fairly regularly during the 1980s to provide some competition, as did a rotating host of northern Illinois teams. A team of southern Illinois birders, tied together by Todd Fink and Judy DeNeal, started spicing up the action in the early 1990s.

The central Illinois team of Bohlen, Kleen, Bob Randall, Mike Ward, and Pat Ward finally hit 175 species on 9 May 1994, soundly beating their previous Big Day best - 173 species on 6 May 1986. The nucleus of the central Illinois team, which raises money through its Big Day efforts to benefit the Adams Wildlife Sanctuary, held 9 of the top 20 Big Day totals as of the end of 1996, the latest published data. With such long experience and intimate knowledge of their chosen geographic area, the central Illinois team members were the obvious target for teams from southern and northern Illinois to beat. Southern and northern Illinois Big Day teams have spent the ensuing years since 1994 striving to add the few birds needed to pass up central Illinois.

A southern Illinois team of Fink, De Neal, Keith McMullen, and M. Seiffert hit 173 in 1995. The team, without Fink and Seiffert, but with the addition of Dan Kassebaum, hit 175 in both 1996 and 1997. The central Illinois team of Bohlen and Kleen and Pat, Mike, and Tony Ward matched their 175 record on 13 May 1997.

A northern Illinois team comprised of David Mandell, Steve Mlodinow, John O'Brien, and Sherman Suter hit 163 on 15 May 1993. In 1994, the team added Bob Hughes and tallied 154 on a 14 May Big Day. On 20 May 1995, Mandell, Robert Hughes, O'Brien, and Sebastian Patti managed 173 for a Big Day team total and on 11 May 1996, hit 174 with the addition of Steve Bailey but it wasn't until 17 May 1997 that the same team, with Mlodinow, finally beat the record with a team total of 176. In all, the team identified 184 species on the 1997 Big Day, but by the American Birding Association's 95% rule for Big Day competitions, the shared total, which is what counts, for the team must be at least 95% of the grand total.

Strategies of play

While Big Day competition here in Illinois has yet to reach the fever pitch it does for New Jersey's World Series of Birding, where tactics and rare bird sightings the week before the contest are often kept strictly confidential, Illinois' three main Big Day squads each employ rather different strategies. What's most interesting about the strategy side of the Big Day game is that all three approaches seem to be working. The team totals, after all, remain neck-and-neck. Big Day strategies are dependent on the personalities on a given

team and the interests and strengths of each member.

The strategy of the southern Illinois team has changed since Fink passed away and McMullen took over the scouting for the group, said Judy De Neal. "Keith McMullen has been ramrodding the scouting part of the equation. He comes down here (to southern Illinois) every weekend from the end of March and even on some weekdays until the count day," she said. "He gets to know where every bird is, how long it has been there, and what leaf we can find it on. Todd (Fink) had a fair notion of where to find the birds, but he didn't scope everything out quite this thoroughly." The southern Illinois team relies on a route that takes them through a wide variety of habitats, moving from owls to rails and bitterns by night in Saline County, to warbler in forests at Pomona or Attwood Ridge, to shorebirds, lingering waterfowl, and Bald Eagles in Pulaski County. The team finishes up in marshy wetlands in St. Claire or Madison Counties where it scoops up remaining rails, all the herons, gulls, terns, and Common Moorhen.

Southern Illinois' earlier spring means that the team has its best shot at breaking records if the Big Day is done in the first week of May, when De Neal said there's still a good chance of finding lingering ducks and early shorebirds. "You trade shorebirds for ducks down here if you do the Big Day any later," she said. The southern team doesn't typically get many of the late-arriving warblers, such as Cape May, Connecticut, and Mourning by running its Big Day in early May. "But if migration is good, we usually get almost all of the warblers," said De Neal. "The real problem can be the weather," she added. "If you don't have 100 birds by 8 a.m. because the weather is bad or the migration is very slow, then you're sunk."

Exhaustion is another factor. "Our biggest problem is stamina. To go from midnight to 10 p.m. is just too exhausting," De Neal said. The southern Illinois team stopped at 11:15 p.m. in 1997, as soon as they knocked off number 175, because the team wanted to match the record and was too tired to try to beat it.

New strategy in the north

The northern Illinois team has changed its tactics over the years and the pay-off was the record-breaking 1997 Big Day total of 176. Mandell said the team now starts in central Illinois and moves northward, reversing the pattern of predecessors in Big Day contests. Illinois has traditionally been divided into three parts for classification of Big Days - northern, central and southern - but Mandell said the lines are blurring. "We took the route that Joel Greenberg devised in the 1970s and flipped it. He used to go from north to south, but we realized that it was better to get the southern species in the early part of the day and that you could keep pushing farther and farther into Lake County (in northern Illinois), if you have time at the end of the day."

The north/central team's strategy is to spend the weeks before the Big Day scouting by telephone. "The phone scouting is as important as the field scouting, probably more so for us, because none of us can take two weeks off before the contest, like some people do for the New Jersey World Series of Birding," said Mandell. But as the team gets closer to the Big Day, the most important scouting is done by phone in the last four days. The compiler of the Chicago Audubon Society's rare Bird Alert, Rich Biss, and many others help the team stake out known sites for breeding and migrant birds, which aids in route planning.

Bailey does most of the scouting in central parts of the state. O'Brien and Mandell spend hours planning the route in the weeks before the Big Day, often arguing until 11:30 p.m. on the night of the contest.

The north/central team concentrates on breeding birds, said Mandell, assuming that many migrants will be picked up along the way as the team ticks off breeders. The group makes sure it hits sites for woodland and grassland breeders at dawn when everything is singing. People assume the team is concentrating on getting migrants along Lake Michigan, but Mandell said the team only visits two migrant traps, Jackson Park and Rainbow Beach. Because traffic is so bad in the city, the team has to get back on the road to get Lake County breeders and can't afford to waste time visiting other lakefront migrant traps, he said. "The route planning is important not only to insure good birds, but also to make sure you distribute interesting birds throughout the day. The period between 11:30 and 2:00 p.m. can be slow, so you need to keep the adrenalin moving. If you plan the route right, you can give the team little boosts, so attention doesn't drag and energy levels stay up. You also need someone to keep the peace and to be a timekeeper. You have to keep moving."

Less formal strategy

Vernon Kleen said his team in central Illinois "is still trying to figure out how to do this. We haven't found a groove that will make sure we're successful year after year. It does make us want to repeat it again and again in hopes we'll really get it right one of these days."

The central Illinois team has a fairly standard route that takes in what little really good natural habitat remains in the largely agricultural region - the Illinois River Valley, the Sangamon River Valley and Lake

Chautauqua. The team doesn't do much advance scouting and usually plans the details of the route about half an hour before hitting the Big Day road. "We don't have as great organization as some other teams. But we have a lot of characters on the team which help us out a lot. Mike Ward beats the bushes and Dave Bohlen pushes until the last minute. It's the only time in the year we get together and it's fun. We're comfortable with each other," said Kleen.

The team does try to take into account the ephemeral wetlands, flooded fields, and changing conditions of the territory caused by the amount of rain in the season. During one year, for instance, Sand Lake near Havanna will hold enough water to provide perfect shorebird habitat. In 1997, the field was dry enough for the farmer who owns it to plant corn. "Sometimes we just don't have the kind of habitat available around here for a large variety of birds," said Kleen. "Birds are concentrated along Lake Michigan, which helps out for Big Days up there, and there's deep forest and openings in southern Illinois, which help those teams. But we're more limited down here, although we never run into traffic jams."

With so much of the team's chances for success dependent on weather and migration, Kleen said they try to concentrate on finding migrant birds, since the breeding birds tend to be on territory and easier to find. Again, unsuitable habitat can limit the team's ability to turn up migrants, because there are few places where birds are concentrated on their way north.

Kleen said the team faces the same challenge everyone else on a Big Day does: Keeping energy levels constant. "Any little lapse of attention can cost the team a crucial bird or two," he said.

Why do it?

The analogy of Big Days and disease, above, was not accidental. Some people can go very far overboard in the Big pursuit game, but they have their reasons. Macklin Smith described his Shorebird Big Year in the June 1993 issue of *Birding*. "In this ennui, I again entertained the thought that my Shorebird Big Year might be an inane enterprise. Competition certainly wasn't the point - I was far, far ahead of James: four species. Neither was science the point, God knows. The point was in the pleasure of having a sustained personal mission, a special obsession that might also, just incidentally, make an impression on the birding community: namely, Macklin Smith will have seen more shorebirds in a single year than any other birder has seen or will ever see... The point was vanity, then, wasn't it? Unfortunately, I was too experienced an observer not to know it. Yet there seemed so much else at play in this enterprise, and I felt that too. I had come to feel that I wanted to hang out more with shorebirds. It felt like love."

"There's a little craziness involved," admitted Mandell. "It's a competition with yourself. A Big Day is a lot like a Spring Count and a Christmas Count rolled together and it's more sustainable than a Big Month - you can't live on that little sleep for a whole month. You don't do any real spring birding, if you're doing a Big Day. You have to scout. However, I don't function well without eight hours of sleep, but I can function just fine on a Big Day without any sleep. I love the planning as much as the execution, the strategy and gaming aspects.

"People who haven't done a Big Day can't appreciate the adrenalin rush," said De Neal. "It's the most exhausting fun you'll ever have. It's Bird Golf! One of these days, the birds, the weather and the planning will come together and you'll have the most fun you've ever had birding. That's why I do it."

Everyone agreed that Illinois' Big Day total for spring can go higher. In 1996, the latest year of published records, when Illinois teams hit 175, out of 181 Big Days recorded nationwide, 16 totals were over 175. As of 1996, some of the state Big Day totals ahead of Illinois' were Maryland with 206, Kansas with 205, Iowa with 204, and California with 196. Wisconsin's highest Big Day total is 184.

Kleen said he thought a "200 total day in Illinois is possible if every single thing goes right." Mandell said he thought a 194 Big Day was quite possible. But he cautioned that Illinois' total will remain well below the possibilities on the coasts and in the mountains. "Those states have elements Illinois just can't replicate, water and elevation. Illinois just doesn't have the water like Iowa, Kansas, and Wisconsin do. They all get better ducks and Kansas gets the western birds we don't easily - White-faced Ibis, Black Rail and Snowy Plover."

But sometimes Illinois does reward those who try very hard. De Neal said the best Big Day her southern Illinois team ever had was the night the team was playing a tape to attract Least Bittern in a strip mine subsidence area. A Black Rail answered the tape, scolding and irate. It was a life bird for every member of the team, but the reward was limited. The Black Rail refused to answer a Black Rail tape. The group surrounded the spot the bird had called from and slowly drew in the circle, with flashlights at the ready. The bird, however, fluttered off into the dark and never called again.

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Breaking the State Big Day Record

by David P. Mandell

It was five minutes after midnight on 17 May 1997 and no sign of Steve Bailey. When Bob Hughes, Steve Mlodinow, John O'Brien, Sebastian Patti, and I had arrived at Parking Lot 8 of the Iroquois Conservation Area in central Illinois half an hour earlier, the sky had been clear and the air still. A Whip-poor-will sang loudly from what seemed just a few hundred feet away, and we could hear the flight notes of thrushes and warblers as they passed overhead. But now the wind had picked up, the Whip-poor-will was quiet, and there were no migrants to be heard.

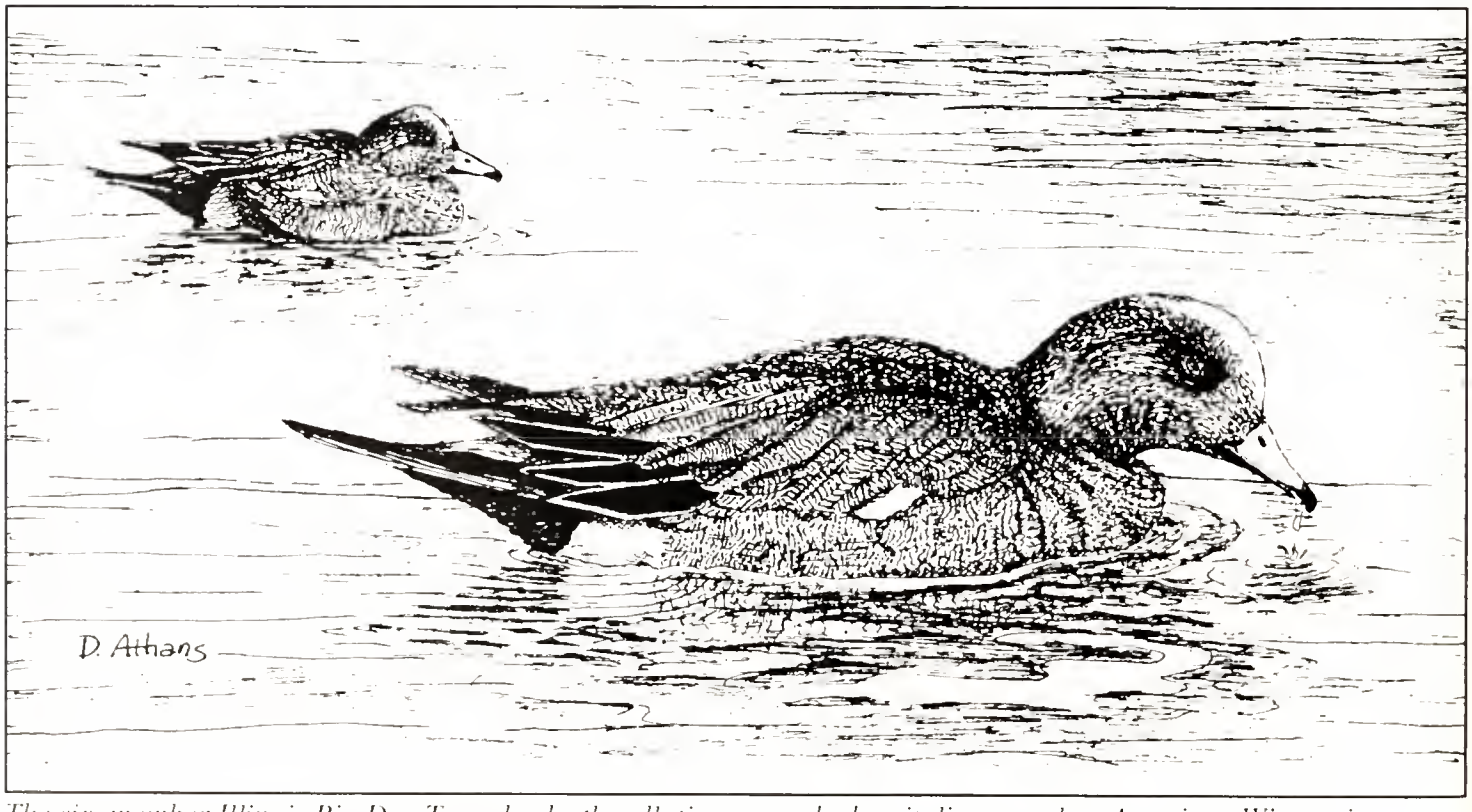
Most importantly, there still was no Steve.

This was no way to start our fifth try at an Illinois big day record. We had come so close the last two years – 173 species both times – and we were convinced that the route we had settled on the previous year would finally yield a new state record.

Our first route had covered only Cook and Lake Counties. We had now expanded to six counties and over 400 miles. Each year we also spent more time in the field staking out birds, and on the phone, finding out from others what was around. Last year had been particularly frustrating. For the first time we had tried a route combining central Illinois, with its field and woodland breeders, with the sloughs and lakefront of the northern part of the state. A cold wind blew all night and all day keeping the birds almost completely silent. At 3 a.m., with only three species we had retreated to the Oak Ridge Truck Stop for pancakes and eggs. Despite the nasty weather and our hour-long breakfast, we managed – with the help of eight species of gulls – to finish just two shy of the record. We knew that with a little better luck we could break 175.

But now it was past midnight, and there was no sign of the team member responsible for the whole southern half of our route.

A pair of headlights finally emerged at the end of the road, and soon Steve was leaping out of his car. He had been delayed at a family graduation party, but had made it from Danville, Illinois, as quickly as he could. Adrenalin and caffeine were now coursing through our veins as we headed off. The wind continued to gain speed. Stumbling in the darkness through the briars and un-



The six-member Illinois Big Day Team broke the all-time record when it discovered an American Wigeon in northern Illinois. Drawing by David Athans.

derbrush, we soon found ourselves on the edge of the large wet prairie at the heart of Iroquois County. The wind did not seem to bother the Henslow's Sparrow. We almost immediately heard two of them singing. However, the Sedge Wrens, usually more numerous and vocal than the Henslow's, were silent. An American Woodcock began to peent softly, and we heard the twittering of wings as another one descended through the air in its display flight. But no Sedge Wrens. Not wanting to waste anymore time, we retreated back through the woods. A Whip-poor-will finally re–awoke and sang a few distant notes as we reached the van.

A quick trip to the other side of the meadow proved fruitless. The wind was even more persistent and the Sedge Wrens maintained their silence. We raced north toward nearby St. Anne Woods hoping to hear the pair of mockingbirds that Bob had staked out earlier, and maybe to pick up a screech or Great Horned Owl. The wind had the same effect as down in Iroquois. The experience was too reminiscent of the previous year. We headed south to Danville.

It was nearly 3 a.m. when we reached the parking lot of the Danville Walmart, our stake–out spot for Common Nighthawk. There were no nighthawks. But the wind was beginning to subside. John and Bob heard thrush flight calls. We agreed on a few Swainson's Thrushes, but found the rest of the calls too fleeting for positive identification. Seb's keen ears picked out a couple of Bobolinks flying over, but the rest of us would have to wait for daylight for ours. After a quick chat with the confused but friendly night watchman we were on our way to Kennekuk Marsh.

We were not more than half a mile from the Walmart when Steve slammed on the breaks and pulled the van to the side of the road. "There they are," he yelled. Two nighthawks gracefully hunted insects beneath the street lamp just in front us. After a quick look by all, Steve gunned the engine, and we continued on to Kennekuk.

By the time we got there, the weather had further improved. It was now calm and mild. We soon added Sora, Virginia Rail, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Feeling hopeful, we drove over to Old Newell Road. It was now time for Steve Bailey to work his magic.

"Who-Cooks-For-You," Steve howled.

"Who-Cooks-For-You," a Barred Owl bellowed back. Another joined in. The two owls continued their chorus back and forth as we sped off for Danville Airport.

The sky was already beginning to lighten and turn purple when we arrived. The grassland birds were in full song, and we soon added Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and Upland Sandpiper, as well as the first of our common birds including Common Grackle and American Robin. As we headed away from the airport Bob and I both glimpsed what looked like a Belted Kingfisher diving off of a telephone wire and into a ditch. We all agreed that the dawn was too precious to waste on a kingfisher. We were sure to get another one, so there was no point in turning back.

It was now 5:30 a.m. and we were back on Old Newell Road. Birds were everywhere.

"Yellow-throated Warbler and Parula singing off to your left," Bob called.

"There is a Prothonotary on the other side of the road. I also got a pileated working on a dead tree," yelled John.

"Did everyone catch the White-breasted Nuthatch and the Carolina Chickadee in the tree right above us?" Seb asked.

"No," Steve Molidinow answered, "but I got both Red-bellied and Red-headed Woodpeckers over here."

"There's a flock of Wood Ducks flying over," I chipped in.

In little over an hour we added close to 60 species, including 18 species of warblers. The next four hours were equally frantic. At Kennekuk, we added such goodies as Orchard Oriole, Kentucky Warbler, Willow Flycatcher, and Bell's and Philadelphia Vireo. We continued on through the Middlefork River Valley, picking up Cooper's Hawk, Lark Sparrow, and Dickcissel, and up through Midford, ticking off Western Meadowlark and Vesper Sparrow.

The team was also working well as a group. The previous year, cold and fatigue had broken down our discipline, and we had strayed apart one too many times. This year we were sticking together. John only had to chastise us once or twice for wandering. The great conditions and the great birds made easier, despite the lack of sleep, to keep alert.

There had certainly been a push of migrants the night before. Thrushes, vireos, and warblers were everywhere we stopped. Despite the great variety of birds, I was getting a little nervous. We were constantly adding new and unexpected species—a pair of Black-billed Cuckoos sitting in a bush right next to the van, unanticipated Orange-crowned and Mourning Warblers, a couple of White-rumped Sandpipers mixed in with a flock of Least Sandpipers, and, oddest of all, a mid-morning Great Horned Owl, flying over the road with a snake in its talons. However, we were still missing a number of birds that we were not going to get at all if we did not find them on the southern end of our route. We had almost finished the Danville area and still were without Summer Tanager, Louisiana Waterthrush, Cerulean and Prairie Warbler,

Northern Mockingbird, and Northern Bobwhite.

Still, it was only 10 a.m. and we had more than 134 species. We were well ahead of last year's pace. However, I didn't think we could miss so many "southerns" and still break the record. After about the fifth time I had listed off all these misses, everyone was just about ready to drive off without me.

Ignoring everyone's wrath, I suggested that we alter our route. Instead of shooting up Route 57 and to Riverdale Quarry before going on to Lake Calumet in southern Cook County, we should instead go back to Iroquois, and see if we could clean up Sedge Wren, mockingbird, and bobwhite before continuing on to the north. Even though we were already close to half an hour behind schedule, everyone agreed.

When we returned to Iroquois at 10:30 a.m., it was as much different than it had been nine hours earlier. The sun was up, the air was still, and it was getting hot. I didn't mind getting my feet wet as we walked into the tall, wet grass. Sedge Wrens were now chattering everywhere. Hoping to see one of the Northern Harriers that sometimes breeds in the prairie, we walked in farther. A sparrow flew up from just a few feet away. It was short tailed and had an orange east.

"It's a LeConte's. I know its got to be a LeConte's," I yelled, waving my hand towards where it had gone down, deep into the grass. We quickly fell into formation and marched to the spot. It sputtered off again, this time choosing to land in the open up in a bush. We headed back to the van and north to where we had missed the mockingbirds earlier that morning. The mockingbirds were now singing away, joined by a bobwhite. Even though we were now over an hour behind schedule, we left Iroquois and headed off for Chicago feeling elated.

The elation, however, was short–lived. Steve thought the van was starting to drive funny and pulled to the side of the road. The rear left tire was going soft. We made it to the nearest gas station in Momence, near Kankakee, and filled the tire with air and the van with gas. Just before we were about to continue on, I saw Seb kneeling next to the vehicle.

"We've got a problem. There's a nice big nail stuck in the tire," Seb reported, managing to sound remarkably cheerful. We made it over to the garage down the road. Seb went in to negotiate, and the rest of us waited outside as we anxiously watched Chimney Swifts circle over head. By the time we got the tire fixed and were back on the road, we were two hours behind, and quite depressed. I made a list of all the birds I thought we still had an honest chance of getting and it did not add up to 175.

When we hit Lake Calumet at 1 p.m., we were really feeling down. The warm, sunny weather of the morning had given way to a damp cold. However, the Peregrine Falcon flying around the Port of Illinois grain elevator, just where it was supposed to be, helped lift our spirits; so did the pair of Northern Shovelers on Dead Stick Pond and the unexpected Northern Harrier. Managing to get through Lake Calumet in less than 25 minutes also made us feel better. The weather change was even more noticeable at Rainbow Beach. The beach was bathed in fog and it was downright chilly. As soon as we were out of the van, Bob got us all on an adult Thayer's Gull which was sitting in among the Ring-billed Gulls. We also added Sanderling and Ruddy Turnstone on the beach and Cape May Warbler and Clay-colored Sparrow in the vegetable garden.

When we got to Jackson Park in Chicago, Bob pulled the same trick as he had at Rainbow Beach, "There's a Hooded Warbler," he called out before half us were even out of he van. The beautiful male Hooded Warbler climbing through the limbs overhanging the other side of the lagoon was certainly a good sign. For the first time on any of our big days, Wooded Isle was full of birds. The cold had brought many of the birds down from the tops of the trees, and the birding was delightful. Despite having already seen most of these birds down in Danville, we were still able to add a few species including Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Hermit Thrush, as well as our first Black-capped Chickadee and Black-crowned Night–Heron.

The hour long drive up to Lake County gave all of us — except for Steve, who was still at the wheel — a welcome opportunity to snooze. John totaled up the list. Lake Calumet and the lakefront had given us a number of birds left off the doomsday list I had made at the garage. We were now at 168! It was only 3 p.m. and we still had all of Lake County to go. We were now feeling pretty good, and were beginning to think we would really could pull off a record.

Our first stop in Lake County was Almond Marsh near Grayslake and Libertyville. We were there for only 10 minutes, but it was worth it. The addition of moorhen, Black Tern, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, and Yellow-headed Blackbird quickly swelled the list to 173. Feeling even more energized, we headed for some flooded fields off of Route 60 near Mundelein. At the field, Steve picked out a Semipalmated Sandpiper and Seb a Semipalmated Plover. Bob refound the Willet he had seen while scouting a few days earlier and I spotted an American Widgeon skulking in the back. We had broken the record! We were ecstatic. Steve and I gave each other high-fives. Seb was all grin.

The celebration, however, was kept short. It was only 4 p.m., and we

still had plenty more birds to see. John pulled out the Brewer's Blackbirds which we heard had been lingering along a roadside all spring. We could not find either the Hudsonian Godwits or the American Black Duck that had been seen there just the day before. The Wilson's Phalarope that had also been seen the day earlier was also gone. The next three hours still proved productive. The two Redheads were just were they were supposed to be, and a lone Sandhill Crane, standing still in a plowed field was a welcome reprieve. The flock of Forster's Terns over Deer Lake, and the Golden-crowned Kinglets singing from the tops of the spruces in Lyons Woods were also valued, although expected, additions. However, the Hairy Woodpecker that flew in front of the van as we were leaving Lyons was a real surprise.

We arrived at Waukegan Beach along Lake Michigan at 7:15 p.m., feeling expectant. We had already broken the record, but thought we could still add a few more birds. Maybe, like last year, we would find a Franklin's Gull, or, like the year before that, a Great Black-backed Gull. We would almost certainly pick up Bonaparte's Gull, a bird we had never missed. There were also shorebirds to be had. After all, Waukegan Beach was about the best place in the state for Piping Plover, not to mention Black-bellied Plover or Red Knot. The wind was picking up, and it was cold. Most of the gulls that had been seen the week before on the Spring Bird Count were gone, and all that was left were a smattering of Ring-billed and Herring; the only sandpipers were Sanderlings and turnstones. After 45 five minutes of shivering, we decided we had had enough of this.

As we walked back to the car, someone spotting something over the road. There, flying over the parking lot, was a Common Loon.

After debating whether or not to run up to Zion Harbor to look for Bonaparte's Gull, we decided instead to try our luck at the local Kentucky Fried Chicken. After dinner we would head over to Zion Marsh and listen for Common Snipe, Least Bittern, and King Rail.

By the time we had finished eating and walked out to the end of the road through Zion Marsh it was dark, and we were all exhausted. The wind continued to blow, and it suddenly felt much like it had so many hours earlier, standing in the middle of the night at the marsh at Iroquois. It was the same wind, the same cold, and the same birdless silence. After 22 hours, 412 miles, 24 bagel sandwiches, and 184 birds, we were ready to call it a day.

Is 184 beatable? I think so. 190 even seems a reasonable goal. If we could nail down a few more of the southerns, finally figure out how to get a Least Bittern, and get lucky with a few more gulls and shorebirds, I think we could do it with our existing route. Would we try again? I had vowed that after we broke the record I would call it quits. I was getting tired of spending my spring weekends driving around scouting for flooded fields, rather than looking at warblers in the lake front parks. I was tired of thinking about new and improved routes, and the advantage of takingthis road rather than that. I was tired of spending the evenings before the count waiting up for every weather report, and getting anxious with every rumor of rain or hint of winds from the wrong direction.

A couple of weeks ago I was talking to John. I mentioned that I had seen a posting on IBET, the Illinois Internet birding discussion group, of a new place in Lake County to view spring shorebirds. I told him that I had printed it out, in case it might come in handy if we decided to do another big day next year. He had already done the same thing. So who knows? Maybe next spring we will be back at it. Maybe next spring, 190!

Author's Note:

People have often told me that our team is too big. I like to think of our team as including even more than the six of us. Our success this year is really owed to a number of people who have provided us with information and encouragement over the last five years. Joel Greenberg has always filled us in with the latest Lake County spring count reports. David Johnson has also provided us with great tips. Every year Richard Biss has called the evening before the big day to let us know if anything new has been called in to the Chicago hotline. Many others have also provided invaluable assistance. A special debt is also owed to Andy Sigler, who has provided us with more worthwhile advice and information than he will ever acknowledge.

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Southern Illinois Team Garners 101 Species on Hot July Day

by Rhonda S. Monroe, alias Red–headed Chat

On 1997 July 21, I and my friends, Cathie Hutcheson and David Kvernes, set out at 4:15 a.m. from Cathie's country home near Makanda with a list of 187 species to locate, a copy of Doug Robinson's "Southern Illinois Birds," and our prearranged map of attack, beginning our first attempt at a summer big day.

Cathie had heard a Barred Owl on her property before David's and my arrival but nothing was vocalizing except insects as we loaded her van with supplies, equipment, and field guides. The sky was clear and the moon was full when we headed for Lake Mermet in southeastern Illinois. We hoped to get the Least Bittern and Common Moorhen known to be there. We veered through Giant City State Park/Makanda on our way south to listen for owls. The owls weren't talking.

Our first group bird was a Whip-poor-will followed by an early rising Northern Mockingbird singing at 4:30 a.m. just south of the park. Along the gravel roads on our way to Interstate 57, we heard a Dickeissel, cardinal, robin, American Goldfinch, and the first of dozens of Indigo Buntings we were to hear or see throughout the day. We detected a Wild Turkey "gobbling" in the distance near a farm but didn't count it even though, on closer inspection, the farm appeared poultry–free.

At Mermet, we were unsuccessful at adding the bittern and moorhen to our list. We all caught a glimpse of what appeared to be the moorhen as it dove for cover among the reeds but didn't get an adequate view to say for certain. Included in the list of species we did find at Mermet were Green Heron (one or more on nearly every dead snag!), Great Blue Heron, Canada Geese, Killdeer, Purple Martin, Carolina Chickadee, Eastern Bluebird, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Prothonotary Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, and Wood Duck. A very vocal Red-shouldered Hawk, a low soaring Osprey, and wild turkeys (2 handsome males 200 yards away from 2 hens with 8+ young) added three sometimes difficult finds to our list. Our day was off to a good start.

We headed back west, stopping at Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge specifically targeting a Henslow's Sparrow. The Henslow's alluded us but a Willow Flycatcher called from a tree top. It was nearly 9 a.m. and we were still missing some easy species as we headed southwest to Alexander County via Mounds City and Horseshoe Lake. At Mounds we picked up one of four Mississippi Kites seen that day.

We skirted the south side of Horseshoe Lake where we found Turkey Vultures, a Great Egret, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows. We passed on checking the Bald Eagle nest area at Horseshoe thinking we'd find an eagle along the Mississippi River levy and headed in that direction.

After a 90–minute trip through the baked farm fields of extreme southern Alexander County in search of early fall migrating shorebirds, Missouri crossovers, and access to the Mississippi, our best finds were Least Tern and Horned Lark. We headed north to Thebes for river access. At Thebes we found Barn Swallows and something we hadn't expected, a *Michelinus flatis* (flat tire). After changing the flat, we headed to East Cape Girardeau in search of mud flats. In a flooded field southeast of East Cape, we found the "bird(s) of the day", beautiful Black-necked Stilts! At this location we also picked up Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers. As I remember, these shorebirds brought our list of species to near 87.

The fear of driving without a spare tire forced us off the birding trail and back to Cathie's for a change of vehicles. We made the switch about 1:45 p.m., ate a quick lunch, and while birding her yard, added Scarlet Tanager and Great Crested Flycatcher. We then headed back out on the road with Pine Hills, the Big Muddy Levy, Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, and Rend Lake still to go.

On our way to Pine Hills, we stopped at Trail of Tears State Park. There we found Chipping Sparrow, Yellow-throated Warbler, Northern Parula, and Pine Warbler. A quick drive through Pine Hills campground netted us a Hairy Woodpecker.

Our next stop was at the enchanting seasonal mud flats along the Big Muddy levy at the intersections of Route 3 and the Big Muddy River. To our disappointment, the Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons that are often at the flats, naturally were not there this day. Present though was a needed Little Blue Heron. We decided to drive the Big Muddy levy from Route 3 to Grand Tower. On the levy we found a Loggerhead Shrike and Tree Swallows, two essential species. From Grand Tower we headed for Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge where we hoped to get some of the easy species we'd missed.

At Crab Orchard, we found a Ring-billed Gull and Prairie Warblers. We failed to locate a Blue Grosbeak

that I had been seeing once a week since spring, had seen just two days prior, and saw again singing loudly the following day. Night was creeping up on us so we passed on driving to Rend Lake and opted for a second trip through Giant City State Park and Makanda instead. The Chuck-will's-widow and Louisiana Waterthrush we hoped for were not to be found at Giant City. The vultures known to roost in Makanda hadn't made it back yet so we failed at the chance for a Black Vulture. Even the nighthawks normally filling the skies over downtown Makanda weren't out this evening.

Our day ended as we topped the 100 mark with Barred and Eastern Screech-Owls at Cathie's place at 10 p.m. We reached 101 species, much lower than I had hoped for but still respectable for an extremely humid, 90 degree day in July. Our total beat what we understood to be the summer record of 87 species achieved 34 years earlier on 21 July 1963.

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DuPage County Team Sets New Big Day Record - 132 Species

by Joe Suchecki

A team of three DuPage Birding Club members – Denis Kania, Jack Pomatto, and I set a new Big Day record for DuPage County on 17 May 1997. Starting at 4 a.m and finishing at 8:45 p.m., we counted 132 species within DuPage County during the 17- hour birding marathon. The previous record was 123 species set by Eric Walters several years ago.

The new DuPage record was not a chance occurrence but the result of careful planning by the team and a little bit of luck. We mapped out a strategy that concentrated on warblers and other woodland birds in the early morning to catch as many species as possible when birds are most vocal. In the afternoon, we checked spots for shorebirds, waterbirds, and grassland species. That strategy worked out very well: we tallied 75 species by 7:30 a.m. and broke 100 by 9:30 a.m.

The luck came from the birds. Timing was critical to ensure a good total for the day and a run at the record. Although the team planned the day to coincide with peak spring migration, birders know that there can be very quiet days – even during May. As it happened, the weather was good and there was a great fall-out of migrants on count day. Large numbers of warblers, vireos, and other migrants were present.

Luck was also in our favor when searching for specific birds. In mid-afternoon, we were walking along the edge of a marsh when a Virginia Rail, a needed species, flushed and flew out in the open for about 30 seconds – more than long enough for all team members to see. We also flushed a woodcock out of a woodlot at midday after early morning attempts to locate the species in known breeding locations were not successful.

In breaking the record, we hit many of the good birding spots in the county including Elsen's Hill, McDowell Grove, Fermilab, Illinois, Benedictine, Maple Grove, Hidden Lake, Springbrook Prairie, and Pratts-Wayne Woods. Birding at Elsen's Hill and McDowell Grove early in the morning yielded a great start and the majority of the species. Later in the day, specific locations were visited for target birds such as titmouse and Black-throated Blue Warbler at Maple Grove, Vesper Sparrow at Fermi, Grasshopper Sparrow and Sedge Wren at Springbrook, Western Meadowlark at DuPage Airport, and Sandhill Crane at Pratts-Wayne Woods. Among the more unusual birds found during the day were Prothonotary Warbler, Black Tern, Forster's Tern, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Osprey. The team also saw a magnificent Brewster's Warbler (as a hybrid, it is not counted in the total).

The Osprey we saw at 4 p.m. at the Eola Road Marsh was the 124th bird for the day and resulted in breaking the previous record. Screech-Owl was the first bird recorded and Sandhill Crane was the last. The team missed several common birds including Hairy Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Harrier, and Belted Kingfisher. The team met Kate and Jim Frazier who had just seen a kingfisher, but we never saw it.

What's next for us? After recovering from our major DuPage birding adventure, we are not content to rest on our record. We're planning for 1998 to see if we can reach the 140 mark. Although we don't expect to top recent high totals in Cook or Lake counties with their important Lake Michigan habitat, we believe that the new mark is achievable for land-locked DuPage County.

There are always challenges ahead in birding – always more birds to see.

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IOS REDS

Set Another Lake County Big Day Record

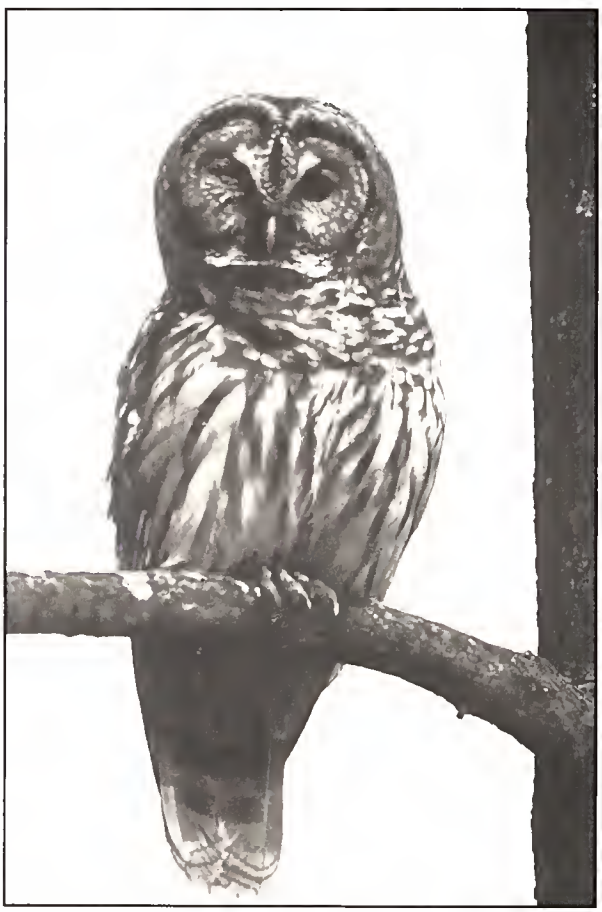
by Sheryl De Vore

The IOS REDS (Renee Baade, Eric Walters, Dave Johnson, and me, Sheryl De Vore) astounded themselves when they broke the Lake County, Illinois Big Day record on 17 May 1996. The only hope the following year was to tie or add one more species to the record they created last year. Instead, the IOS REDS (minus Eric Walters who could not attend due to a leg injury) astounded themselves even more when they produced 163 species in one county within 22 hours on 20 May 1997. Mr. "Glib" David Johnson now insists we could get 170 next year!

Here's what it took for us to break the record. We had a plan and a schedule and vowed to stick to it (at the most we were only one hour behind). We did research such as calling people on the phone and asking what they saw where. We scouted the day before. We skipped meals and brought snacks and Gatorade. We kept our thoughts to ourselves unless they were going to get us another bird. We had a good working knowledge of the area including the back roads.

And we prayed for good luck and good weather.

We started at 3 a.m. at Wright Woods in Lake County where a Barred Owl had responded to a tape in mere seconds on Spring Bird Count Day about a week and a half earlier. It was cool that morning, necessitating wearing layers, even a hat and gloves, but the wind was calm and the sun was destined to shine.



The IOS Reds tried for a Barred Owl at 3 a.m. on the Lake County Big Day, but had to wait until 11 p.m. to finally add it to the list. Photo of this adult Barred Owl was taken on 21 April 1996 at the Mernet Lake Conservation Area by Eric Walters.

One hour later, the Barred Owl succeeded in eluding us. So we settled for Dave's duet with an Eastern Screech–Owl and a Great Horned Owl interjecting its hoots from afar just to let us know who was king of the forest. As impending daybreak threatened to rain our owl parade, we left for Waukegan Beach along Lake Michigan. Our hoped–for Franklin's Gull never showed, nor did any other rare gull species. But we did add Willet, Black–crowned Night–Heron, a very late Common Goldeneye (with a little help from Eric who was birding on the beach), 21 gorgeous Ruddy Turnstones, and a first–year Summer Tanager (summer teenager as Dave calls it).

If you're planning a Lake County Big Day, this is the place you have to be at sunrise. Here's where you can get all your swallow species, many shorebirds, gulls, and migrants. It's imperative here to have one pair of eyes looking up, while others are looking forward or to the lake. I glimpsed our only Green Heron of the day, a flyby while Dave and Renee were ticking off swallows.

The most exciting find, however, was the federally endangered Piping Plover, which posed for a few moments on the sand, just as we walked north toward it, then flitted behind the swales, escaping the scope of any other birder who happened by that day. We heard it had been there, so we were looking for it, and that helped.

Our next stop was the ravine bottoms at Bowen Park in Waukegan, where my prediction of finding our only Black–throated Blue Warbler of

the day, came true. It was there just as it had been last year.

Next, we headed to Lyons Woods, a former conifer nursery owned by the forest preserve. White firs, spruces and pines, 15 to 20 feet tall, attract some rare birds here including nesting Golden-crowned Kinglet and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Probably our only chance for getting these species in late May in Lake County is at Lyons Woods. When we arrived, we witnessed an amazing sight. Warblers, loads of them—bay-breasteds, Nashvilles, redstarts, magnolias—many species fed on the ground beneath the conifers. We could almost kick them out of our way as we walked off the path, urged on by this magical forest. It was difficult to break away – but on a Big Day, you don't relish the moments, you chalk up the birds, and get on with it. Besides, Dave reminded me we could get warblers anywhere during migration – we were there to find the kinglet and nuthatch. OK. OK. So Renee and I found him the kinglet. We heard the sibilant "see, see, see, see" sound and followed it to the male declaring its territory just as Dave was coming around the other side. No nuthatch, though.

On to Illinois Beach State Park – where we were nearly arrested. I will say no more about that because Dave and Renee won't let me. But suffice it to say, that sweet-talking Renee saved the day.

Here was the most grueling part of our adventure. We were there for Western Meadowlark, Upland Sandpiper, and Brewer's Blackbird, possibly Grasshopper Sparrow. We had those species there last year, and this is the most reliable spot in Lake County to get them this time of year. We hiked thigh-high in marshy, wet sedges, and cattails to get to where the blackbirds were.

I don't need to tell you that had we not seen that gorgeous blackbird with a yellow eye (and had I been forced to fork over $75 to the guy who almost arrested us), I would have been utterly miserable in my wet clothes the rest of the day.

But finally after hundreds of insect larvae swished in our boots (maybe even a couple of crayfish), we saw the blackbird and its mate. Then we dashed, well, swished, back to the car to get a clothes change and more Gatorade. We just kept drinking that Gatorade Dave brought. Renee insisted that's what kept our energy levels high. I think the birds had something to do with it, too.

Swallowing pride

Each of us had to swallow pride at least once that day. It's a requirement for a Big Day. For instance, Dave and I were reminded of a lesson birders sometimes forget. Don't assume anything. We walked by what Dave and I tossed off as just another Song Sparrow, but Renee insisted we check it out, and it turned out to be a Lincoln's, the only one we had that day.

I shouted Common Loon at a bird that turned out to be a cormorant and Dave saw some rare duck that turned out to be some other rare duck. Not to mention the Willet he insisted was a Whimbrel (Actually, I made many more mistakes than he did, but who's writing this article anyway?)

Next it was on to the Des Plaines River Wetlands Project on Wadsworth Road and Route 41 to get our Yellow-headed Blackbird and Pied-billed Grebe. We didn't get the Common Moorhen, though. And we should have.

Renee next led the way to Redwing Slough and Deer Lake, where she and Joel Greenberg do the Spring Bird Count. Here we had Forster's Terns, Black Terns, and an American Bittern responding to our tape right where Renee said it would be. Even a Green-winged Teal.

Off to Chain O' Lakes State Park. Renee and I had staked the park out the previous day and had an Acadian Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Cerulean Warbler. Today, we heard none of them, but I suggested we play the warbler tape and by golly, the little guy, sang right back at us. We also enjoyed a Hairy Woodpecker feeding young.

Shorebird and woodpecker trek

Then it was that time of the day – my mid-afternoon slump and the Dave Johnson Shorebird Trek. Renee got behind the wheel while Dave shouted out directions, where to go, where to stop, what we would find where.

We drove. We saw. We counted.

Hudsonian Godwit in this little spot. White-rumped Sandpiper over there. Semipalmated Plovers and Semipalmated Sandpipers in that little spit. Greater Yellowlegs over there.

Didn't you see it, Sheryl?

No.

Sheryl, look in that scope again.

Oh, yeah. Now I see it. Phew.

Hey, we've got to get to Ryerson Woods by 6 (the plan was 5:30 – but since it was already 5:30, we obviously weren't going to make it.) The Pileated Woodpecker will be there. It has been hanging around the preserve entrance in the flatwoods drumming on an oak about 5 or 6 p.m. — and I had just seen it a week earlier for the Spring Bird Count at Half Day preserve.

Now all you central and southern Illinois birders, please don't snicker. Pileated Woodpecker is a very rare bird to see in Lake County. Getting it on a big day is not an easy feat. And, we got it! Pulled right into the entrance and got it drumming.

I reminded Dave and Renee that we hadn't got Indigo Bunting yet, so we listened for its singing, and got that one, too. Dave also found a very strange–looking bird that turned out to be a Black–billed Cuckoo.

By this time, it was nearly sunset and we still didn't have a Field Sparrow. "I know where we can get one," said Dave. Renee drove through the grueling Buffalo Grove traffic to Buffalo Grove Forest Preserve; we hopped out of the car to listen for the bouncing ping pong ball, heard it, checked it off, and sped on over to Almond Marsh where a Ring–necked Duck was supposed to be hanging out. In the near darkness, Renee not only found the ring–neck, but also a pair of Ruddy Ducks. We were laughing like school kids as we got back into the cars. "I can't believe it. Ruddy Ducks," Renee kept saying.

Then we were off to our final trek (well, penultimate trek – there was the little matter we had to settle with the Barred Owl before midnight.)

Final hours

Nine p.m.–ish, we arrived at Route 173 in Zion near Illinois Beach State Park and walked the long old concrete path toward the lake with our tapes. This is my absolutely favorite part of Lake County Big Day. It was calm, clear, silent. One by one we played the tapes. Whip–poor–will. King Rail. Virginia Rail. Least Bittern. They all responded. Snipes winnowed. Woodcocks peented. Last year we missed the King Rail and Least Bittern and three of us didn't hear the Whip–poor–will. But this time, we heard everything loudly and clearly. The Virginia Rails, in fact, clucked across the marshes for several minutes after we had played the tape. It was nearly too much to believe – that we had the honor of ending our day with some of the rarest Lake County birds.

But we weren't done yet. It was a good half hour back to Wright Woods. We had our 162 species, we broke the record from last year's 158. But we wanted that owl! We could taste that owl! So we went. We played the tape. And it called right back at us. 163 species. 11 p.m. We might have even had time to dig up a moorhen tape and play it somewhere and get 164. But it seemed only fitting to end the day with the Barred Owl.

We also missed Belted Kingfisher. And we should have gotten at least one unusual gull. And we missed Vesper Sparrow even though we knew they were there.

But can we produce another Piping Plover and all those shorebirds and late migrating ducks next year? Will the Pileated Woodpecker be there waiting for us? How far can the IOS Reds go? All I can say is this – no way will I ever attempt to do what the Illinois Big Day birders did (see separate story). If anyone knows Illinois and birding, it's those guys! Hope they don't decide to do a Lake County Big Day next year.

—Sheryl De Vore
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Verily, verily says the hermit thrush,
as the long light slants through the naves and aisles of the wood.
Over and over the mourning dove,
calling on long summer Sundays when the church bells toll,
says that all you ever believed, when you promised love to a mate, is true;
all you dreamed that your child would be, is true.
And the right comes true.
And the song comes true.
Truth on the air, these days, is not too common:
we have sown the ether with rumor and propaganda,
and every hour there is some new alarm or excursion into folly.
But, as Nature softens nothing, so it tells no lies.
The birds bear unshaken witness.
Their song is changeless, from age to age.

—Donald Culcross Peattie, "A Cup of Sky"
The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1945

SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS - Breeding Season 1997

Red-throated Loon Spends June Near Chicago

Late afternoon on 23 May 1997, I received a message from Jim Phillips that a strange loon had been at Tampier Lake in the Palos area (Cook County) all day. Phillips works for the Cook County Forest Preserve District and had been surveying the area. He was sure it was a Red–throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*), but wanted others to check the bird since this was an unusually late day for any record near Chicago.

The morning of 24 May 1997, Kosh Monday, Kay Hanson, Tom Hamilton, and I set out for Tampier Slough and parked at the east end. Tom soon spotted a loon, but the bird immediately took to the air and landed at the west end of the lake nearly a half–mile away. We all trooped to the west end and spent nearly an hour searching, while enjoying the many flycatchers, sparrows, and hawks passing by. Suddenly Kosh spotted the bird in nearby vegetation. It was a loon and it was diving. It seemed to be a small loon with an upturned bill, which it held high at an angle even when it surfaced. We all had scopes, and it being a bright sunny day, good looks were enjoyed by everyone.

The bird had a small smudge on the lower chest, which may have been the only sign of any breeding plumage. We thought it was a least one year old and that it was late in reaching breeding plumage. The head and crown were dull gray, not black, and the face was similar, including and above the eye.

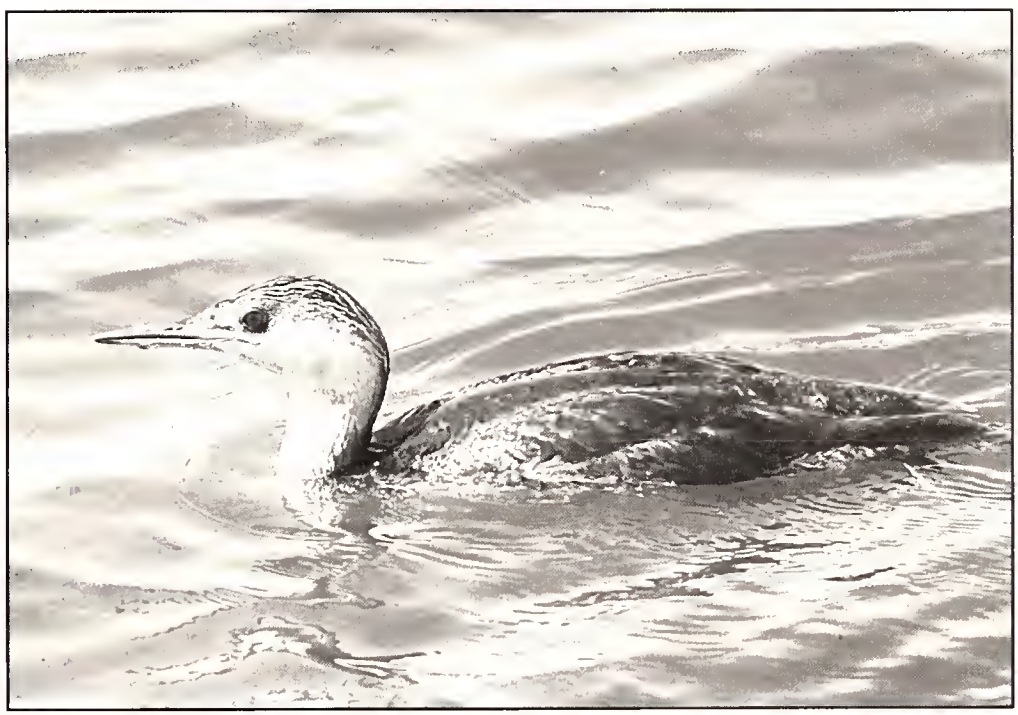
The back was dark with conspicuous feather edges.

At about the same time we spotted another loon nearby which turned out to be a Common Loon (*G. Immer*) in breeding plumage. So it turned out that both loons were at Tampier Lake on an unusually late date.

According to Jim Phillips and his co–workers, they had just stocked the lake with fish when the loons arrived.

Both Common and the Red–throated Loon were observed at Tampier Lake until at least 24 June.

—James Landing
2135 Cortez St.
Chicago, IL 60622



Immature Red–throated Loon, 22 June 1997, Tampier Sough, Cook Co. This is a first summer record for Illinois. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich.

Henslow's Sparrows in Southern Illinois

On 13 June 1997, I surveyed two fields in Johnson and Pope Counties for breeding birds. One was an 800–acre field owned by the U.S. Forest Service on the Johnson–Pope County line and the second was a 300–acre idle field located about seven miles west in Johnson County. Both sites contained a mix of grassland and shrubland habitats. At each site I censused birds using 100–m fixed radius point counts.

One exciting find in these fields was the discovery of two fairly large populations of the state–endangered, Henslow's Sparrow *(Ammodramus henslowii)*. At least 28 territorial (singing) male Henslow's Sparrows were detected on the 800–acre tract on the Johnson–Pope county line and at least 20 territorial males were detected on the 300–acre Johnson County tract. This discovery was noteworthy because it involved two relatively large populations and because the birds were discovered in the far southern part of the state. Populations of Henslow's Sparrows larger than 15 pairs are very rare in Illinois (Herkert 1994). Up through 1994, only one modern population of Henslow's Sparrows (Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area) was known to consistently contain more than 15 pairs (Herkert 1994). Since 1994, two other populations of more than 15 pairs have been discovered, one at the Jasper County Prairie–Chicken Sanctuaries

(E. Kershner reported in Kleen 1997) and a second at the Des Plaines Conservation Area in Will County.

Henslow's Sparrows have historically not been regular summer residents in the southern part of Illinois. Bohlen (1978: 127) listed the Henslow's Sparrow as a very local summer resident in northern and central Illinois. Summering populations in the southern part of the state have only recently been discovered, and most populations found so far have been fairly small, usually consisting of 3–5 pairs (Robinson 1996). The increase of Henslow's Sparrows in the southern part of the state appears to be associated with the creation of idle grasslands that have been established as part of the Conservation Reserve Program (Herkert 1997).

The Henslow's Sparrow was the second most commonly encountered species in these two fields accounting for 9.5% of all birds observed, only the Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*), which accounted for 10.3% of all observations, was seen in greater numbers. The Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*) tied Henslow's Sparrow as the second most common species with 9.5% of all observations. Other bird species detected in these fields included: Red–winged Blackbird, *Agelaius phoeniceus* (9.0% of all observations), Field Sparrow, *Spizella pusilla* (9.0%), Eastern Meadowlark, *Sturnella magna* (8.5%), Northern Bobwhite, *Colinus virginianus* (8.1%), Common Yellowthroat, *Geothlypis trichas* (6.7%), Yellow–breasted Chat, *Icteria virens* (5.0%), Prairie Warbler, *Dendroica discolor* (3.1%), Brown Thrasher, *Toxostoma rufum* (2.5%), Eastern Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus* (2.2%), Eastern Towhee, *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* (2.0%), American Goldfinch, *Carduelis tristis* (1.6%), Northern Cardinal, *Cardinalis cardinalis* (1.4%), Blue Grosbeak, *Guiraca caerulea* (1.3%), Brown–headed Cowbird, *Molothrus ater* (1.3%), Orchard Oriole, *Icterus spurius* (1.3%), and Gray Catbird, *Dumetella carolinensis* (1.1%).

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—James R. Herkert
Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board
524 South Second Street
Springfield, IL 62701

Black Rail in a Lee County Restored Wetland/Prairie

At 5:15 A.M. on 27 June 1997, I entered a complex of restored wetlands owned and managed by the Richardson Wildlife Foundation in southern Lee County. I was there to census restored wetlands for research I was conducting on the distribution of wetland birds. The wetland is 3 – 5 acres in area and has been restored to a semi–permanent, shallow (1 m depth) marsh. The wetland is ringed by 5 – 8 m of cattails, beyond which is an 8 – 10 m ring of sedges and rushes. The entire wetland is surrounded by a restored prairie.

In an area where my tape recording could be heard across the entire wetland I played the calls of Pied–billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*), Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*), American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), Sora (*Porzana carolina*), Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*), and Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*). During this tape sequence the only wetland birds I saw were an American Coot (*Fulica americana*) and a Common Moorhen. I did not hear a response until the "Kickie–doo" of the Black Rail was answered. I had been fooled before by echoes from trees and buildings and first thought it must have been an echo. But I heard another "Kickie–doo" call after playing the recording a second time. I allowed the recording to play five to seven more times; each time I heard the "echo". I

then stopped the tape and listened "Kickie–doo"! After two more calls I was able to locate the general area from which the call was emanating.

This area was between the restored prairie and wetland, the area consisted of grasses (blue–joint grass and bluestem) and forbs mixed with the occasional sedges and rushes. The vegetation in this "sedge meadow" was very dense and 0.5 – 1 m in height. I approached the area with the tape recorder already rewound and played two minutes of Black Rail calls eliciting no response. I continued to census the area locating a female Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) apparently paired up with a drake Mallard (*A. platyrhnchos*), but no sign of the rail.

I returned to the Richardson Wildlife Foundation on 9 July 1997, at 6:30 in the morning and walked to the general area where I had previously heard the bird. I again played the "Kickie–doo" call (3 more times) then stopped, there were no replies. Had I actually heard the rail on the 27th or was it a case of my imagination running wild? I hit the play button again and heard the sweet, eerie call, of "Kickie–doo"! The bird was now closer to the wetland in taller (1– 1.5 m), very dense vegetation. It responded to the tape recording 5 to 7 times, counter singing with the tape after each call. I searched for the bird but the dense cattails, sedges, and grasses prevented any real chance of seeing this small rail. I moved closer and heard what turned out to be the last vocalization I heard, a harsh scold note. I continued to walk around in the general area, until I realized that I would hate to find the first Black Rail nest in Illinois since the 1930s (Bohlen 1989) trampled under foot. I left and returned on two occasions but heard no further responses.

The habitat in Lee County appears similar to Mantanzas Prairie (Mason County), an area where Kevin Richmond located a Black Rail during the 1996 breeding season (Kleen 1996). The presence of these rails during the breeding season suggests that this species may be nesting in small numbers across the state, although I have no evidence that there was more than one bird present at the Lee County site. Very few Black Rails have been recorded during the breeding season. Monitoring and restoration of Black Rail's preferred habitat (sedge meadows) should result in more sightings and/or vocal responses, and the confirmation of Illinois' second rarest rail nest (last confirmed Yellow Rail nest was in the 19th century) in 65 years.

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Kleen, V. M. 1997 The 1996 breeding season. Meadowlark 6: 26–38.

—Michael Ward
Illinois Natural History Survey
607 East Peabody Drive
Champaign, IL 61820

Pine Warbler and Red–breasted Nuthatch at Sand Ridge State Forest

On 4 July 1997, I was looking for summer residents at Sand Ridge Forest in Mason County and found two species I do not usually see in summer. In one of the pine plantations I heard a Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*) singing and obtained good views of the bird. While I was watching this bird a Red–breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*) began calling and flew into the same dead pine tree. Both are very rare summer residents and R. G. Bjorklund, (Annotated Field Checklist for Birds Observed While in the Sand Ridge Forest) considers the Pine Warbler a migrant and the Red–breasted Nuthatch as "occasional nest" and indicates that it has been seen at all times of the year. Even though I watched both birds sporadically for 15 – 20 minutes neither showed an inclination to go to a nest site nor did I see any females or young. I intended to go back to the area to see if young were present but never got the chance. Both could potentially nest at Sand Ridge and birders visiting in summer should try to confirm this.

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Field Notes

Field Notes drawing of a Wood Thrush by Denis Kania.

The 1997 Breeding Season Report

by Vernon M. Kleen

The 1997 breeding season was unlike that of any other in recent memory. The cool, wet, and delayed spring created a threatening challenge — the severity of which may never be fully realized — for many species. Here's the scenario: the exceptionally cool and damp weather that persisted through the first week of May precluded the development of normal and anticipated food sources that early nesting species depend upon. By instinct, these birds delayed and further delayed their breeding attempts waiting until the needed food sources were more abundant. In the meantime, during this deficiency period, large numbers of migrants were arriving, staying, and competing for and seriously depleting the already inadequate food supply needed to fuel the next leg of their northward migratory journeys. By this time, the nesting neotropic migrants had returned and were both ready and eager to begin their annual breeding cycles, but the paucity of food sources continued to prevail. As a result, all three groups: early breeders, later breeders, and neotropic transients, which don't usually compete seriously with each other, were now simultaneously competing for and further depleting the limited food resources as well as critically preventing those resources from naturally replenishing themselves until much later in the season. Although data are not available for this report, it would be of ornithological value to know what really happened to the populations of the two, normally asynchronous, groups of nesting species as well as the transient species as a result of this food shortage during the height of the "primary" nesting season and whether nesting attempts later in the season were more successful or not.

As in the past, greater numbers of Bald Eagles, Double-crested Cormorants, and Sandhill Cranes are nesting in Illinois. On the flipside, we regret the loss of some of our traditional Great Blue Heron colonies (especially at Carlyle Lake and Rend Lake) and all of the Black-crowned Night-Herons nesting along the Illinois River. Black-crowneds may also be in serious trouble at Lake Calumet. Although a pair of Ospreys once again constructed a nest, and incubation may have occurred, we're still waiting for the first confirmed evidence of a successful nest in Illinois since 1952. A new Ring-billed Gull colony was found at Waukegan (see article in future issue), and Herring Gulls attempted nesting at Lake Renwick. Least Terns did very well along the lower portions of the Mississippi River, and Western Kingbirds were back and may have had successful nests near the gambling boat east of St. Louis. Other records of interest include the presence of a Red-breasted Nuthatch at Sand Ridge State Forest (see seasonal highlights), Golden-crowned Kinglets and Black-throated Green Warblers at Lowden-Miller State Forest, and the Black Rail heard in Lee County (see seasonal highlights).

For those still unaware, the Cooper's Hawk was officially delisted from the state's list of threatened and endangered species effective 3 March this year. However, what's happened to immature Red-headed Woodpeckers? Perhaps it's time to keep track of the number of adult and immature Red-headed Woodpeckers observed for the seasonal reports.

As normal, there are always an interesting array of June and July occurrences of non-breeding birds. The Red-throated Loon beyond mid-June in s.w. Cook County is a perfect example (see seasonal highlights). Records such as these are referred to as Non-Breeding Summer Occurrences (N.B.S.O.) and have been incorporated into (and placed at the end of) the individual species accounts. Records of migrant birds, such as shorebirds and warblers, that lingered into June or had returned in July have been forwarded to the seasonal editor for inclusion in the appropriate Spring or Fall Season Reports.

1997 was another excellent year for the Breeding Bird

Survey Program; continued long–term and short–term population data for Illinois—nesting species have been gathered annually for 32 consecutive years by reliable volunteers. The most usable trend data comes as a result of the same observers completing their assigned B.B.S. routes year after year. Experience has proven that observations submitted by different persons for the same route are not the same and therefore, are not comparable and thus can not be used in the statistical trend analyses. So, please take time to thank the dedicated observers who monitor these routes every year to be sure there's reliable information for determining the national and Illinois population trends.

As usual, this compilation is the result of field efforts from dozens of dedicated professionals and volunteers. Without their continued support there would be few records for future generations to review and compare. Persons responsible for records in the accompanying species accounts are acknowledged individually after their records. Considerable effort has been made to be sure that all information recorded is correct and properly credited. The original source documents for all records that appear in this report are archived in the state's permanent record file. Records from the last breeding season report that were inadvertently credited to an incorrect observer appear in the corrigenda at the end of this report.

Collectively, the observers and contributors for this report are: Cindy Alberico, Ed Anderson, Carl Becker, David Bohlen, Dale Birkenholz (DBi), Eric Bollinger, John Ball, Nancy Bent, Renee Baade (RBa), Richard Bjorklund (RBj), Todd Bugg (TBu), Steve Byers (SBy), Dean Corgiat, Robert Chapel, Becky Dyer (BDy), Donald Dann, Larry David, Myrna Deaton, Sheryl De Vore, Carolyn Eggimann, Terry Esker, Carolyn Fields, Matt Fraker, Brad Grover, Bill Glass (BGl), Mike Gilmartin (MGi), Ann Haverstock, Barrie Hunt, Cathie Hutcheson, Clifford Heil (CHe), Jim Herkert, Jeremiah Haas (JeH), Kanae Hirabayashi (KHi), Leroy Harrison, Mary Hennen, Scott Hickman, Shannon Horn (SHo), Dan Kassebaum, Eric Kershner, Elizabeth Loebach, Laurel Ann Kaiser, Vernon Kleen, Jim Landing, Robert Lindsay, Wade Louis, Anne Mankowski, Charley Marbut (CMa), Cindy McKee (CMc), Joe Milosovich (JM), John McKee (JMc), John McDaniel (JMD), Keith McMullen, Robert Montgomery, Rhonda Monroe (RhM), Walter Marcisz, Byron Paulsen, Jim Phillips (JPh),

Judy Pollock (JPo), Mark Phipps, Kevin Richmond, Michael Retter, Rochelle Renken (RR), Roger Reason (RRe), Scott Robinson, Alan Stokie, Brad Semel, Darrell Shambaugh, Eric Smith, James Smith, Michelle Simone (MSi), Robert Szafoni (RSz), Wes Serafin, Craig Thayer, Janet Underwood, Hugh Vickery, Dan Williams (DW), Doris Westfall (DWe), Eric Walters, Jeff Walk, Ken Wysocki (KWy), Michael Ward (MW). Many thanks, too, to Eric Walters for putting this report in the proper format required for publication in *Meadowlark*.

As standard policy, all observers, regardless of experience, are required to fully document all unusual observations. The Illinois Ornithological Records Committee (I.O.R.C.) has a new documentation form (available on request) that should help all observers with the documentation process.

As a printing aide, the following abbreviations have been used throughout this report:

ad.	= adult	m.ob.	= many observers	N.C.	= Nature Center
subad.	= subadult	est.	= estimated	N.P.	= Nature Preserve
imm.	= imm.	Co(s)	= County (ies)	N.W.R.	= National Wildlife Refuge
yg.	= young	C.A.	= Conservation Area	S.F.	= State Forest
pr.	= pair	F.P.	= Forest Preserve	S.P.	= State Park
*	= documented record	F.W.A.	= Fish and Wildlife Area	M.C.	= Maximum Count(s)
**	= specimen record	L	= Lake	N.B.S.O.	= Non–Breeding Summer Occurrence
resp.	= respectively	N.A.	= Natural Area		

Carl.L	= Carlyle Lake (Clinton Co)
CBG	= Chicago Botanic Gardens (n. Cook Co)
Chi	= Chicago—excluding JP & LCal (Cook Co)
COLSP	= Chain O' Lakes S.P. (Lake Co)
CONWR	= Crab Orchard N.W.R. (Williamson Co)
DPCA	= Des Plaines C.A. (Will Co)
DPRWDP	= Des Plaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project (Lake Co)
ESTL	= E. St. Louis (St Clair Co)
GLPSP	= Goose Lake Prairie S.P. (Grundy Co)
GRCA	= Green River C.A. (Lee Co)
HL	= Horseshoe Lake (Madison Co)
HLCA	= Horseshoe Lake C.A. (Alexander Co)
IBSP	= Illinois Beach S.P. (Lake Co)
JP	= Chicago's Jackson Park (Cook Co)
KCP	= Kennekuk Cove Park (Vermilion Co)
LCal	= Lake Calumet (Cook Co)
LChau	= Lake Chautauqua N.W.R. (Mason Co)
LCNP	= La Salle County Nuclear Plant (La Salle Co)
LMSF	= Lowden–Miller State Forest (Ogle Co)
LRen	= Lake Renwick (Will Co)
LShel	= Lake Shelbyville (Shelby Co)
MS	= McGinnis Slough (Palos, Cook Co)
MTNWR	= Mark Twain N.W.R. (Calhoun & Jersey Cos)
MWF	= Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation (Kane Co)
PRSNA	= Prairie Ridge State N.A. (Jasper Co) (formerly PCS — Prairie–Chicken Sanctuary)
Rend L	= Rend Lake (Franklin Co)
RLCA	= Rice Lake Conservation Area (Fulton Co)
SAD	= Savanna Army Depot (Carroll Co)
Spfld	= Springfield (Sangamon Co)
SRSF	= Sand Ridge S.F. (Mason Co)
SRSP	= Starved Rock S.P. (La Salle Co)
UCCA	= Union County C.A. (Union Co)
Wauk	= Waukegan (Lake Co)

A number in parentheses ( ) indicates the number of birds observed at a particular location or on a particular date. No number signifies single birds.

1997 BREEDING SEASON REPORT

Red-throated Loon

N.B.S.O.: Tampier Slough (Cook Co) (subad.), mid May thru 22 June (EW, JM—photo, m.ob.) — 1st 'summer' occurrence for Illinois. See seasonal highlights.

Common Loon

MWF (subad.), 12–13 June (RM); Heyworth Lagoons (McLean Co) (subad.), 7 June (MF, Tbu).; Homer L (Champaign Co) (subad.), 2 June–6 July (*RC); Mahomet (Champaign Co) (2 subad.), 7–14 June then (3 subad.), 15 June and (1), 16 June–20 July (*RC).

Pied-billed Grebe

Nesting: GRCA(+), June (MW); c. Lee County (3 locations and 3 broods = 3, 2+ & 5 yg.), 9, 10 & 23 July (MW); Almond Marsh L (Lake Co) (on nest), 30 May (EW) and (broods: 3 & 4 yg.), 5 Aug. (MW); DPRWDP (8 — 2 ad., 6 yg.), 5 July (SH); LCal (1–2 nesting prs.), June/July (JL, WM); n.c. Bureau County (ad. w/ 2yg.), 19 & 26 Aug. (BP). **Others:** LCNP (imm.), 27 July (CMc, JMc); Lawrence County wetland (1–2), 15 June–14 July (LH); Wabash County wetland (2), 12 June (LH).

American White Pelican

N.B.S.O.: Nauvoo (97), 13 June (VK); LChau (39), 20–31 July+ (MD).

Double-crested Cormorant

Nesting: Baker's L (Cook Co) (61 nests); 4 Aug. (SBy); Wetfoot L (Cook Co) (28), 1 June (JPh); Riverdale (2 nests—success ''), 29 June (KWy); Utica (La Salle Co) (12 nests), 30 May (DS); HL (2 nests), 8 July (VK et al); Hat Island (Calhoun Co) (50), 30 May (VK); Carl.L (300 nests), 4 June (VK); Lren nesting with Great Egrets 2 July (JM) LRen. Probably nesting at several more sites not yet discovered. **M.C.:** 1000+, Riverdale (Cook Co), June/July (JL) and 625, 10 June (WM); 300+, MS, 24 July (WS); 200, Carl.L, 27 July (KM); 69, Wauk, 11 July (EW); 65, Utica (La Salle Co), 30 May (DS). **Others:** Rockford (2), 2 June (BG); Middlefork F.P. (Champaign Co) (subad.), 21 June (RC); Mahomet (Champaign Co) (ad.), 20 July (RC); HL (20), 17 July (MP); Wabash County wetland (1–12), 9 June–25 July (LH); s.w. Jackson County (20), 15 June (RhM).

American Bittern

Braeburn Marsh (Kane Co), 17 June (DS); GLPSP (2), 10 June (JH, BGl); Lawrence County wetland, 25 June & 30 July (LH).

Least Bittern

Grant South F.P (Lake Co) (heard), 9 June (CF); LCal (1–2 at different locations), 20–24 July (WM, JPo); Arcola (Douglas Co), 4 July (RC); Lawrence County wetland (1–4), 15 June–31 July (LH); Marion County (ad.), 14 & 28 May (JW, EK).

Great Blue Heron

Nesting: Estimates from the aerial surveys of the Mississippi & Illinois rivers, Corps of Engineer Lakes and southern Illinois colonies indicate: 32 active colonies with 7300+ nests; this includes 4 newly discovered sites and the disappearance of 6 rather large colonies. Reports from other sites are: Winnebago County (4 colonies), June/July (DW); Ogle County (6 colonies, 50 nests total); April/May (JeH); Baker's L (Cook Co) (92 nests), 4 Aug. (SBy); Bartlett (Cook Co) (270 nests), 29 Apr. (BS); Wetfoot L (Cook Co) (22 nests), 1 June (JPh); Goose L/ DesPlaines R (Cook Co) (131 nests), 4 June (JPh); Busse Forest N.P. (Cook Co) (7 nests), 17 July (JPh); Wampum L F.P. (Cook Co) (3 nests), 19 Apr. (WM); Somonauk Creek (De Kalb Co) (11 nests), 22 Apr. (JeH); Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (4 nests), 11 Aug. (EL et al.); Momence Wetlands (Kankakee Co) (17 nests), 25 Apr. (SHo et al.); Worley L (Tazewell Co) (218 nests), 3 July (RBj); Clear L (Mason Co) (468 nests), 11 June (RBj); Vermilion County (4 sites, about 200 nests), June (RSz); Clark County (56 nests), June (RSz); s.e. Illinois (11 colonies in 7 counties, 300+ nests), June/July (TE). **M.C.:** 500, Stump L (Jersey Co), 24 July (KM); 165, MS, 28 July (WS).

Great Egret

Nesting: Estimates from the aerial surveys of the Mississippi & Illinois rivers, Corps of Engineer Lakes and southern Illinois colonies indicate: 13 active colonies with nearly 1400 nests. Reports from other sites are: Baker's L (Cook Co) (81 nests), 4 Aug. (SBy); Wetfoot L (Cook Co) (81 nests), 1 June (JPh); Riverdale (Cook Co) (10–11 nests), 29 June (KWy); LCal (probably nested in 'Big Marsh'), April/June (WM, JL); Worley L (Tazewell Co) (58 nests), 3 July (RBj); Clear L (Mason Co) (39 nests), 11 June (RBj); Alorton (St. Clair) (est. 500+ nests, yg. mostly fledged), 8 July (VK et al.). **M.C.:** 1000, Stump L (Jersey Co), 24 July (KM); 300+, MS, 24 July (WS); 200, E. Cape Girardeau (Alexander Co), 17 July (KM); 32, HL, 21 July (KM). **Others:** Pecatonica (Winnebago Co) (2), 7 June (DW); Braeburn Marsh (Kane Co) (9), 9 June (DS); Lawrence County wetland (up to 40), 17–31 July (LH); Wabash County wetland (up to 160), 9 June–25 July (LH).

Snowy Egret

Nesting: Alorton (St. Clair) (est. 10–20 nests, yg. in the process of fledging), 8 July (VK et al.). **M.C.:** 10+, Stump L (Jersey Co), 24 July (KM); 7, Chain-of-Rocks (Madison Co), 18 July (KM). **Others:** LCal (2–3), 20 & 27 July (3 ad.), and 3 Aug. (2 ad.) (AS); Lawrence County wetland (1–2), 19 June–14 July (LH); Wabash County wetland (1–9), 9 June–25 July (LH); s.w. Jackson County (ad), 15 June (RhM).

Little Blue Heron

Nesting: Alorton (St. Clair) (est. 500+ nests, yg. in the process of fledging), 8 July (VK et al.). **M.C.:** 200, Sauget (St. Clair Co), 27 July (KM). **Others:** LCal (2–3), 20 July (2 imm.), 27 July (2 imm. 1 ad.), 3 Aug. (1 imm.) (AS); Lawrence County wetland (3–7), 17 June–31 July (LH); Wabash County wetland (3–14), 6 June–25 July, but (40), 21 July (LH); s.w. Jackson County (24), 15 June (RhM).

Cattle Egret

Nesting: Alorton (St. Clair) (est. 100 nests, yg. in the process of fledging), 8 July (VK et al.) **M.C.:** 100, Sauget (St. Clair Co), 27 July (KM). **Others:** Lawrence County wetland (up to 200), 15 June–31 July (LH); Wabash County wetland (up to 150), 26 May–25 July (LH).

Green Heron

Nesting: Fairmount (Vermilion Co) (3 fledglings), June (JS). **M.C.:** 5, Lawrence County wetland, 10 July (LH); 4, Columbia (St. Clair Co), 22 June (KM). **Others:** LCal (numbers down substantially) (JL).

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Nesting: Baker's L (Cook Co) (3 ad., but no nests), 4 Aug. (SBy); Wetfoot L (Cook Co) (21 nests), 1 June (JPh); only one LCal site this year (the others were abandoned) (estimated 300–600 nests — a population decline of 50–60%), April/June (WM, JL); Worley L (Tazewell Co) & Clear L (Mason Co) (1st time for **NO NESTS** in the Illinois rivercolonies since record-keeping began in 1962) (RBj); Alorton (St. Clair) (est. 500+ nests, yg. mostly fledged), 8 July (VK et al.). **M.C.:** 30+, Wauk, 11 July (EW); 15, HL, 22 June (KM). **Others:** Braeburn Marsh (Kane Co) (ad.), 20 June and (2–4 ad.), 15–17 July plus (1 imm.), 18 July (DS); Denny Road Marsh (Kane Co) (ad.), 18

July (DS); Lawrence County wetland (1–8), 19 June–30 July (LH); Wabash County wetland (6), 1 July (LH); s.w. Jackson County (ad. + 4 imm.), 15 June (RhM).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
M.C.: 4, Sauget (St. Clair Co), 27 July (KM, RC). **Others:** Lawrence County wetland, 10 July (LH).

Mute Swan
Nesting: Chardon (Lake Co) (2 nests), 29 Apr. (BS); Round L Marsh (Lake Co) (nest), 29 Apr. (BS); n. Lake County (4 nests), 15 May (EW); w. Lake County (7 yg.—about 1 week of age), 29 May (EW). **Others**: MS (pr.), late May thru 16 Aug.+ (EW).

Canada Goose
Nesting: Wilmette (4 nests), 16–20 Apr. with fledglings by 2 May (EW); Homer (Champaign Co) (6 sucessful nestings), May/June (JS). **M.C.**: 162 (ad. & yg.), Palatine, 14 July (CF).

Wood Duck
Broods: 3 (3–7 yg. each), CBG, 23 July (CF); (5 yg.), Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co), 19 July (CF); 3rd brood from same box, Homer (Champaign Co), 5 Aug. (JS). **M.C.:** 150+ (mostly yg.), 24 July (WS); 50, St. Clair County, 27 July (KM); 47 (mostly yg.), Mendota (La Salle Co), 30 May (DS).

Green-winged Teal
N.B.S.O.: LCal, 21 July (male) & 27 July (2 males) (JL); RLCA (Big L) (male), 5 July (RC).

American Black Duck
N.B.S.O.: Arcola (Douglas Co) (ad.), 26 July (RC).

Mallard
Nesting: Homer (Vermilion Co) (recently hatched yg.), 10 Aug. (JS); PRSNA (21 nests), April/July (WL fide JW). **M.C.:** 200, Wabash County wetland, 6 July (LH); 63 (males), Palatine, 28 June (CF).

Blue-winged Teal
Broods: Lee County (2 = 3 & 2 yg.), 20 July (MW). **Adults**: Gurnee Mills Wetlands (Lake Co) (12), 26 July (SH); Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co) (female), 25 Jue (CF); Utica (La Salle Co), 2 Aug. (DS); Heyworth Lagoons (McLean Co), 14 June (MF, TBu); Paxton (Ford Co) (pr.), 6 July (RC); Lawrence County wetland (2–6), 15 June–30 July (LH); Wabash County wetland (1–2), 9–12 June (LH); HL (1–2), 22–30 June (KM). **Others:** Almost 'impossible' to locate at LCal anymore (JL).

Northern Shoveler
e. Lee County (female), 27 June (MW).

Lesser Scaup
N.B.S.O.: Wilmette, through 17 June (present since last summer) (EW); Riverdale (male), 10 June (WM); LCal (subad. male), 13 July (JL); Heyworth Lagoons (McLean Co), through 7 June (MF, TBu).

White-winged Scoter
N.B.S.O.: LCNP, 1 June (distant photo available — CMc).

Common Goldeneye
N.B.S.O.: Chi (Montrose), 9 June–24 July (JPo, EW); Joliet (4), early June (perhaps all summer) (JM).

Hooded Merganser
Nesting: MWF (7 small yg.), 9 May and (1 yg.), 3 June (RM); Wabash County wetland (4 yg.), 9 June (LH); Mermet L C.A. (7 — female w/ 6 yg.), 25 May (CMe, JMe). **Others:** Shirland (Winnebago Co) (female plumage), 22 June (BG); Riverdale (Cook Co) (2 ad.), 10 June (WM); Heyworth Lagoons (McLean Co) (female plumage), 20 July (MF et al.); Vermilion County (female plumage), 8 Aug. (JS); Arcola (Douglas Co) (female plumage), 26 July (RC); Embarras R (near L Charleston) (2 'females' — 4th Coles County summer record), 27 July (BH); Wabash County wetland (7), 10 July (LH).

Common Merganser
N.B.S.O.: LRen (male), 6 July (DS).

Red-breasted Merganser
N.B.S.O.: LCNP (2 females), 1 June (CMc, JMe).

Ruddy Duck
Almond Marsh L (Lake Co) (pr.), thru 30 May (EW); Riverdale (Cook Co) (4 ad. = 3 males, 1 female), 10 June (WM); MS (4), June/July (WS, m.ob.).

Turkey Vulture
Nesting: Romeoville (Will Co) (pr. at nest site), 31 May (EW); Kinkaid (Christian Co) (2 yg. in nest), 28 Aug. (CE); PRSNA (nest), May (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 44, MTNWR, 5 July (EW); 30, Jackson County, 17 July (KM); 28, Paxton (Ford Co), 6 July (RC); 20 (roosting), Clear L (Mason Co), April/June (RBj); 14, Saganashkee Slough (Cook Co), 7 June (CT). **Others:** Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co), 25 June (CF); Sand Ridge N.C. (Cook Co), 21 June (WM); LCal, 12 July (WM); w. Will County (9 — from 5 locations), June (JM).

Double-crested Cormorants and Great Egrets at the Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve, 2 July 1997. Plainfield, Illinois. Will Co. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich.

OSPREY
Nesting: Bergman Slough/John J. Duffy F.P. (Cook Co) (nest — no success — 2nd year at this site), April/June — one ad. still present 25 July (CT, WS, m.ob.). **Others:** S. Beloit (Winnebago Co) (heard), 19 June (VK); Cuba Marsh F.P. (Lake Co), 11 June (CF).

Mississippi Kite
M.C.: 12, UCCA and nearby areas, 7 June (MD). **Others**: Jersey County, 12 June (KM); Thebes (Alexander Co) (6), 8 June (MD). (Regular at the other southern Illinois locations).

Bald Eagle
Nesting: At least 26 confirmed active nests by May (compared to only 20 in 1996). Examples include: Galena Junction (Jo Daviess Co) (1 yg.), 10 June (EA); Savanna Army Depot (3 nests = 2, 2 & 1 yg.), 19 June (EA); Spring L (Carroll Co) (2 yg.), 19 June (EA); Rockton (2 fledglings), April/June (DW); Clear L (Mason Co), 1 yg. fledged on 5 July (RBj); RLCA (2 yg.), 1–2 July (JB fide AM); Red's Landing (Calhoun Co) (1 yg. in nest), June (MP). **Others:** Wauk (subad.), 6 June (EW); GLPSP (subad.), 22 June (VK et al.); n.w. Alexander County (ad. pr.), 25 June (VK et al.); s.w. Alexander County (subad.), 25 June (VK et al.).

Osprey landing in nest at Palos Forest Preserve, 7 May 1997, Cook County. Photo by Eric Walters.
Above center: Osprey in flight near nest site in Palos Forest Preserve, 7 May 1997, Cook County. Photo by Eric Walters. This nest failed, and later blew down during a strong wind in the summer of 1997.

Northern Harrier
Nesting: Barry (Pike Co) (4 yg. about to fledge), 29 June (DC); PRSNA (2 successful nests), May/June (JW, EK); Marion County (2 prs, suggested nesting), May/June (JW, EK). **Others:** GRCA (female), early July (MW); Nachusa Grasslands (Ogle/Lee Cos) (male), June/July & (female), June (MW); LCal (2), early June (fide WM) and (male), 20 July (WM); Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (female), 4 May–18 June (periodically) (fide AH).

Sharp-shinned Hawk
SRSF, 4 July (DB).

Cooper's Hawk
The official delisting of the Cooper's Hawk as a state endangered or threatened species occurred on 3 March 1997. **Nesting:** Winnebago County (several nests) (DW); MWF (ad. and yg.), July (RM); Kane County (2 fledglings), up to 15 Aug. (*JU); Ryerson C.A. (Lake Co) (ad. w/ food for yg.), 20 May (EW); Palos (McClaughry Springs F.P.) (nest), 9 May and (3 fledglings), 13 July (CT); n.e. Kane County (nest), 31 May (EW); Lockport (Will Co) (nest w/ 2 yg.), thru 30 June (JM); SRSF (2 imm.), 4 July (DB, BDy). **Others:** Lee County (4 birds), June/July (MW); Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co) (ad.), 7 June (CF, JMD); Deer Grove East F.P., 25 & 28 June (CF); Chi, 12 June (JL); Chi (Powderhorn L F.P.) (ad.), 6 July (WM); ad. pursuing bobwhite, Coles County, June (EB fide BH).

Red-shouldered Hawk
Nesting: Shirland (Winnebago Co), April/June (BG, DW). **Others:** Ryerson C.A. (Lake Co), 15 June (SH); SRSP (2 = ad. & fledgling), 22 June (CMe, JMe); Williamson County (pr. defending territory), 22 June (RL).

Broad-winged Hawk
Palos F.P. (Cook Co) (pr.), 26 May (EW); Joliet (ad.), 13 June — becoming very scarce (JM); Middlefork F.P. (Champaign Co), 20 July (RC); Pere Marquette S.P. (2), 5 July (EW).

Swainson's Hawk
Nesting: n. Kane County (2 nests — each successfully fledging 2 yg.), June/July (RM et al.). **Others**: n. Kane County (ad. light morph), 6 July (CMe, JMe); Coral Woods (McHenry Co), last observed on 22 July (RBa).

Red-tailed Hawk
Nesting: s.w. Cook County (8 nests), April/June (WS); Homer (Champaign Co) (3 successful nests), April/June (JS).

Peregrine Falcon
Nesting: Chi (7 sites, at least 3 with active nests), 25 Apr.–28 May (MH). **Others:** Highland Park, 17 June (DD); LCal (ad.), 22 June (WM).

Ring-necked Pheasant
M.C.: 50 (mostly heard), s.e. Livingston County, 18 June (VK);

47, Champaign/Piatt counties, 5 June (RC). **Others:** Results of the annual spring pheasant index showed a 15% population decline since the 1996 survey and 46% since the 1995 survey [the B.B.S. index from 1996 to 1997 showed a similar (12.1%) decline]; the 1997 index is 39% below the previous 5–year mean and 27% below the 1975–1997 mean (LD).

Greater Prairie–Chicken
Nesting: PRSNA (10 nests), April/May and (broods = 18 observations, 1–13 yg./brood), May/July (JW, EK). The Marion County flock was enhanced by 96 more Kansas chickens this spring (fide CBe).

Wild Turkey
Rose Hill (Jasper Co), 10 June (RC).

Northern Bobwhite
Nesting: PRSNA (3 nests), May/June and (7 broods), June/July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 68, Flora (Clay Co), 14 June (RC); 67, Jefferson County, 27 June (VK); 48, Monroe/St.Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 42, Hancock County, 13 June (VK); 41, Richland/Wayne counties, 4 June (VK). **Others:** Palatine (male calling), 31 July–1 Aug. (CF). The bobwhite population index from 1996 to 1997 B.B.S. data shows only a negligible change (–0.5%) (LD).

Black Rail
c. Lee County (heard), 27 June & 9 July (MW).

King Rail
Nesting: GLPSP (4 = 2 ad. w/ 2 yg.), 6 July (DS) thru 12 July (CMc, JMc); PRSNA (2 broods), June/July (JW, EK). **Others:** Pecatonica (Winnebago Co) (heard), June/July (DW); Lawrence County wetland, 15 June (LH).

Adult King Rail with young. 10 July 1997. Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area. Grundy Co. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich.

Sora
LCal (Deadstick Pond), 20 July (WM); Rt. 47 Marsh (Kane Co) (3 males), 31 May (EW).

Common Moorhen
Nesting: LCal (several prs, but scarce compared to years past) June/July (JL) and (6 yg.), 20 July (WM). **Others:** c. Lee County (2 ads.), 24 June (MW); Chi (Egger's Woods F.P.) (2 ad.), 8 June (WM); Arcola (Douglas Co) (6 ad.), 26 July (RC); Lawrence County wetland (1–2), 15 June–10 July (LH); HL (Eagle Park) (ad.), 30 July (DK).

Adult Cooper's Hawk near nest. 10 May 1997. Lockport, IL. Will Co. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich.

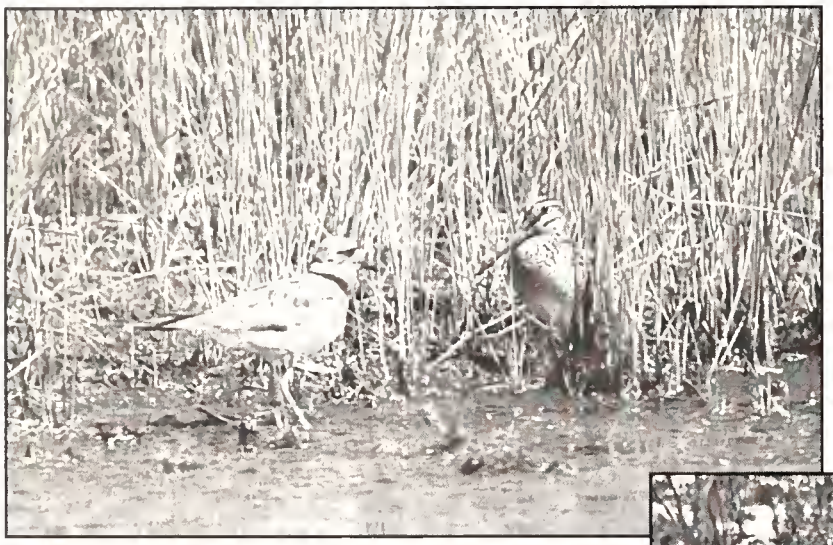
American Coot
Nesting: LCal (5 yg.), 21 June (WM); Chi (Egger's Woods F.P.) (6 yg.), 8 June (WM); n.c. Bureau County (5yg.), 19 & 26 Aug. (BP); HL (Eagle Park) (2 ad., 1 imm.), 7 Aug. (DK). **Others:** Heyworth Lagoons (McLean Co) (1–2), through 23 June (MF, TBu); Lawrence County wetland (1–2), 15–24 June (LH); Wabash County wetland (10), 16 June (LH); E. Cape Girardeau (Alexander Co), 3 July (KM).

Sandhill Crane
Nesting: Rockton (Winnebago Co) (2 ad., 1 imm.), 22 June (BG, DW); Pecatonic (Winnebago Co) (nested), June (DW); Moraine Hills S.P. (Henry Co) (7 ads., 2 nests), 28 Apr. (BS); other McHenry County sites (9 = 1–2 ads./site, 3 nests), 28 Apr. (BS); COLSP (10 ads., 3 nests), 28 Apr. (BS); Lyons Prairie & Marsh (Lake Co) (4 ads., 1 nest), 27 Apr. (BS); other Lake County sites (8 = 1–2 ads./site, 4 nests), 27–29 Apr. (BS); Barrington (Cook Co) sites (2 = 1–2 ads./site, no nests), 29–30 Apr. (BS); Nelson L Marsh (Kane Co) (3 ads., nest probable), 29 Apr. (BS) and (2), 18 July (DS); Braeburn Marsh (Kane Co) (pr. + 1 yg.), 3–4 June (*AH—photo); Pratts Wayne Woods F.P (Du Page Co) (pr.), 29 Apr. (BS). **Others:** Denny Road Marsh (Kane Co) (2), 3 July (DS); GLPSP, 10 June (JH, BGl).

Killdeer
Nesting: LCal (abundant nester) (JL); Kane Co, 31 May (4 eggs) (EW). **M.C.:** 60, Heyworth Lagoons (McLean Co), 20 July (MF et al.); 45, Jasper/Effingham counties, 10 June (RC).

Black–necked Stilt
E. Cape Girardeau (at least 2), 21 July (RhM et al.)

Spotted Sandpiper
Nesting: Wauk (full–grown yg.), 11 July (EW); LCal (abundant nester) (JL). **Others:** Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co) (6 ad.),



Common Snipe (right) with Killdeer. 10 July 1997. Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area. Grundy Co. The snipe is an annual summer resident here. Photo by Joe B. Milosevich.

1 July and (8 = 5 ad. & 3 imm.), 9 July (CF); LCNP (16), 1 June and (6), 27 July (CMc, JMc); Heyworth Lagoons (McLean Co) (9), 7 June (MF, TBu); Homer (Champaign Co), June/July (JS); HL (1–2), June/July (KM).

Upland Sandpiper
Nesting: Glenview (Cook Co) (pr. w/ 3 yg.), 29 June (EW); Coles County airport (6 — probably a family), 14 July (BH); PRSNA (2 nests, both depredated), May/June and (2 broods), June/July (JW, EK). **Others:** e. Lee County, mid–June/early July (MW); n.w. Ogle County, 28 June (DW); Winnebago County, 24 July (DW); Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (2 ad.), 24 May–21 June (AH); Glacial Park (McHenry Co) (2 calling), 11 June (RBa); e. McLean County, 30 July (LD); Decatur (4 — perhaps pr. w/ 2 yg.), 15 July (MD).

Common Snipe
GLPSP (ad.), 10 June (JH, BGl) thru 12 July (CMc, JMc).

American Woodcock
Nesting: Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co) (ad. & yg.), 26 Apr. and (4), June (WM). **Others:** Lockport (Will Co) (2), 30 June (JM); Homer (Champaign Co), June/July (JS). According to a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service note, the woodcock population in the Central Region (including Illinois) has declined 39% since 1968 due primarily to the degradation and loss of habitat on the breeding, migration and wintering grounds (HV).

Laughing Gull
N.B.S.O.: Chi (2nd year), 8 June (JL).

Bonaparte's Gull
N.B.S.O.: Wauk, 6 July (CMc, JMc).

Ring–billed Gull
Nesting: Wauk (1460 nests), 14 May (EW); LCal (est., 10,000–12,000 nests), May/June (JL) — on 11 July the news media picked up a feature concerning a large number of fledged yg. dying of starvation and being hit by cars (WM); Wauk (first fledglings), 5 June (fide EW); LCal (1st juveniles), 21 June (JL); Evanston (1st juvenile away from nest site), 25 June (EW). **M.C.:** 4000 (at nesting site), Wauk., 14 May (EW); 430 (w/ about 75 juveniles), Evanston, 10 July (EW); 160, HL, 9 June (KM).

Herring Gull
Nesting: LCal (at least 16 ads., exact number of nests undetermined) (WM) but (1st juveniles ready to leave), 22 June (WM); LRen (unsuccessful nest), early June (JM); Evanston (1st juveniles), 9 July (EW). **Others:** LShel (2—2nd yr.), 4 July (RC).

Caspian Tern
N.B.S.O.: IBSP (12 & 5), 26 & 19 July, resp. (AS); Evanston (3), June/July, but (10), 10 July (EW); LCal (at gull colony) (1–3), June/July (JL, WM); Chi (Wm W. Powers C.A.) (ad.), June (WM); Joliet (2 ad.), early June (JM); GLPSP (3), 9 July (JH, BGl); LCNP (3), 11 July (DS); SRSP (22), 27 July (CMc, JMc).

Killdeer displaying at nest site. 31 May 1997. North-central Kane Co. Photo by Eric Walters.

Common Tern
Nesting: Wauk (27 birds and 10 nests), 6 June — but colony abandoned (no fledglings) by late June (EW, DD). **N.B.S.O.:** Harvard (McHenry Co) (3), 21 June (DW).

Forster's Tern
M.C.: 25, Deer L (Lake Co), 30 May (EW). **N.B.S.O.:** Evanston (6), 25 June (EW); HL (2), 22 June (KM); LCNP (6), 27 July (CMc, JMc); E. Cape Girardeau (Alexander Co) (ad.), 25 June (VK et al.).

Least Tern
Nesting: Mississippi River (Cairo to Grand Tower) (4 island colonies: 169 nests = 2, 7, 71 & 89), June (RR). **Others:** McClure (Alexander Co) (1 ad., 3 imm.), 29 July (DK); s.w. Jackson County (at fish farms), 17 July (KM) and (8 at Gorham), 29 July (DK).

Black Tern
M.C.: 8, Deer L (Lake Co), 30 May (EW). **N.B.S.O.:** Pecatonica (Winnebago Co), 27 July (DW); Fox River Dam (Kendall Co) (2), 7 June (DS); HL, 22 June (KM); E. Cape Girardeau (Alexander Co) (2 ad.), 15 June (RhM).

Mourning Dove
Nesting: PRSNA (18 nests), April/July (JW, EK); Evanston, 21 Mar. and (building), 4 Aug. (EW). **M.C.:** 80, Richland/Wayne counties, 4 June (VK); 59, Hancock County, 13 June (VK); 57, Jasper/Effingham counties, 10 June (RC); 57, Clay County, 14 June (RC); 56, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM); 55, Johnson County, 12 June (VK); 50, Pulaski County, 10 June (VK). The dove population index from 1996 to 1997 B.B.S. data shows a modest decline (–8.8%) (LD).

Black–billed Cuckoo
Nesting: PRSNA (ads. w/ 4 yg.), 25 June (JW, EK). **Others:** LMSF (3 males), 21 June (JMD); Grant South F.P. (Lake Co) (4 males), 9 June (CF); LCal (2), 22 July (JL).

Yellow–billed Cuckoo
M.C.: 6, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM). **Others:** Palos (2 pr. w/ food for yg.), 19 June (WS).

Barn Owl
Nesting: Cypress Creek N.W.R. (breeding pr.), 15 July (KM); Union County (pr. + 3 yg.), 21 Aug. (RL).

Eastern Screech–Owl
Nesting: Libertyville (fledgling), 9 July (SD); Joliet (5 fledglings), mid June (JM—photos).

Great Horned Owl
Nesting: Libertyville (fledgling), 30 May (SD); Homer (Champaign Co) (2 successful nestings), April (JS).

Barred Owl
Nesting: Rock Cut S.P. (3 fledglings), 2 June (BG); Shirland (Winnebago Co) (nest w/ yg.), 16 June (BG); McClaughry Springs Woods (Cook Co) (fledgling), 1 June (CA).

Short–eared Owl
s.e. McLean County, 22 Aug. (MR).

Common Nighthawk
Evanston (more common this summer than past two summers), June/July (EW); SRSF (7 territories), June/July (RBj).

Chuck–will's–widow
SRSF (2 territories), June (RBj).

Whip–poor–will
M.C.: 148 territories, SRSF, June/July (RBj); 6, Mackinaw State F.W.A., 21 June (MF).

Chimney Swift
M.C.: 150, HL, 18 July (KM). Large numbers were killed by passing vehicles over L Spfld's dam during the early portion of the breeding season; the birds were hit while seeking insects low to the ground and over the water during the cool and damp weeks (VK).

Ruby–throated Hummingbird
Palos (4 — at 3 locations), 13 June (WS); n. Union County (nearly all white bird), late July and early August (CHe fide CH and RhM).

Belted Kingfisher
Homer (Champaign Co) (nest), June (JS).

Red–headed Woodpecker
Nesting: Homer (Champaign Co) (3 successful nests), June/July (JS); PRSNA (6 nests — all in utility poles), May/July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 6, Union County, 3 July (KM). **Others**: SRSF, no juveniles seen as of 21 July (Rbj). Where are all the immatures'

Red–bellied Woodpecker
M.C.: 20, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 19, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF); 13, Jasper/Effingham counties, 10 June (RC). .

Downy Woodpecker
Nesting: Libertyville (yg. at nest), 11 June (SD). **M.C.:** 7, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Northern Flicker
M.C.: 6, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

Pileated Woodpecker
Palos (exact location ''), 31 May–7 July (CT).

Eastern Wood–Pewee
Nesting: Palos F.P. (Cook Co) (on nest), 16 Aug. (EW). **M.C.:** 14, Palos (3 locations), 13 June (WS); 12, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF); 10, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 9, Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co), during June (WM); 9, Joliet, 13 June (JM); 9, Lockport (Will Co), 15 June (JM); 8, Mackinaw State F.W.A., 9 June (MF); 4 (males), Libertyville, 5 June–9 July (SD).

Acadian Flycatcher
M.C.: 15, Shirland (Winnebago Co), 17 June (BG); 6, Jackson County, 17 July (KM). **Others:** Coral Woods (McHenry Co) (building), 25 June (RBa); Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co) (male), 7 June (CF, JMD); Palos (2 — different locations), June (WS); Joliet (pr.) and Lockport (Will Co) (pr.), 13 & 15/30 June, resp. (JM); Mackinaw State F.W.A. (2 males), 9 June (MF); s. Charleston (6 pr.), June (BH).

Alder Flycatcher
Grant Preserve F.P. (Lake Co) (male), 14 & 21 June (AS).

Willow Flycatcher
M.C.: 7 (4 males), Chi (Powderhorn L F.P.), 8 June (WM); 5 (males), DPCA, 20 June (JM); 4 (males), Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co), 30 May–24 July (AH). **Others:** Libertyville (male), 5 June–9 July (SD); LCal (present, but in reduced numbers), June/July (JL); Mendota (La Salle Co) (pr.), 8 June (CMc, JMc); Sauget (St. Clair Co) (3), 26 July (KM).

Least Flycatcher
Grant Preserve F.P. (Lake Co) (male), 21 June (AS).

Eastern Phoebe
SRSP (3 yg. in nest), 17 May (CMc, JMc).

Great Crested Flycatcher
M.C.: 12, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF); 7, Lockport (Will Co), 15 June (JM); 5, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Western Kingbird
Nesting: ESTL (2 breeding prs., at least 2 fledglings observed), June/July (DK, KM, m.ob.)

Can you find the nest? Look in the bottom right third of the photo for four Killdeer eggs that look similar to the stones. 31 May 1997. Kane Co. Photo by Eric Walters.

Eastern Kingbird
Nesting: JP (nest), 20 June (EW); PRSNA (nest), June and (8 prs.), May/July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 16, Orland Park, 1 June (WS); 8, DPCA, 20 June (JM); 4, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Horned Lark
M.C.: 223, Champaign/Piatt counties, 5 June (RC); 37, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Purple Martin
Nesting: Evanston (10 nests), June (EW). **M.C.:** 30, Stump L (Jersey Co), 26 July (KM); 14, Palos/Orland Park, 1 June (WS).

Tree Swallow
Nesting: Homer (Champaign Co) (7 successful nests), May/July (JS). **M.C.:** 20, s.w. Jackson County, 3 July (KM); 20, Carl.L, 7 July (KM).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Nesting: Wilmette (2 burrows), 13 June (EW); Revis Prairie (Mason Co) (22 birds w/ 10 nesting burrows), 22 June (MF). **M.C.:** 10, Chain-of-Rocks (Madison Co), 18 July (KM).

Bank Swallow
Nesting: Evanston (52 burrows—little success), early July (EW); Winthrop Harbor (large, successful colony), June/July (EW); Lansing (45 burrows), 29 June (WM). **M.C.:** 200, HL, 17 June (KM); 150, Chain-of-Rocks (Madison Co), 30 June (KM).

Cliff Swallow
Nesting: Wadsworth Wetlands (Lake Co) (3 nests—1st confirmed Lake County nesting in the 90's), 30 May (EW); Gurnee Mills (Lake Co — colony of 20+ birds under 'overhang' at Mariott Hotel), 27 July (SH); Saganashkee Slough (Cook Co) (8 nests), successful by mid July (WS); e. Grundy County (small colony under bridge), 10 July (JM); Little Indian Creek bridge (La Salle Co) (1–2 nests), 5 July (DS); L Evergreen (McLean Co) (14 nests), June/July (DBi fide MF). A dramatic increase in the colony sizes at Carl.L (in Clinton, Bond and Fayette counties) have been observed the past few years (DK). **M.C.:** 20, HL, 18 July (KM); 15–20, rural La Salle County, 2 Aug. (DS); 15, Troy Grove (La Salle Co), 8 June (CMc, JMc). **Others:** DPRWDP (2), 5 July (SH); Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co) (2 ad.), 25 June (CF)

Barn Swallow
M.C.: 43, Champaign/Piatt counties, 5 June (RC); 38, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

Blue Jay
M.C.: 23, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF); 23, Jefferson County, 27 June (VK); 17, Pope County, 11 June (VK); 13, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 13, w.e. Adams County, 2 June (VK).

American Crow
Nesting: n. Cook County (building), 27 Feb. (EW); Skokie/Evanston (7 nests), 20 Mar.–2 May (EW). **M.C.:** 74, e. Winnebago County, 19 June (VK); 54, Champaign/Piatt counties, 5 June (RC); 43, n.w. Livingston County, 17 June (VK); 39, s.e. Livingston County, 18 June (VK); 35, Chain-of-Rocks (Madison Co), 24 July (KM); 34, Pulaski County, 10 June (VK); 34, Pope County, 11 June (VK). The crow population index from 1996 to 1997 B.B.S. data shows a slight decline (–3.0%) (LD).

Fish Crow
Stump L (Jersey Co), 12 July (RC); Milam Landfill (St. Clair Co) (2), 17 June (KM).

Carolina Chickadee
M.C.: 11, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Tufted Titmouse
M.C.: 40, Clay County, 14 June (RC); 11, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM); 6, Mackinaw State F.W.A., 9 June (MF).

Red-breasted Nuthatch
SRSF (male on territory), 4 July (DB, BDy).

White-breasted Nuthatch
M.C.: 6, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Brown Creeper
Nesting: Pecatonica (Winnebago Co) (pr. + 3 fledglings), 7 June (DW).

Carolina Wren
M.C.: 18, Pope County, 11 June (VK); 11, White County, 5 June (VK); 11, Pulaski County, 10 June (VK); 8, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

House Wren
Nesting: Homer (Champaign Co) (45 broods produced), May/August and still incubating 16 Aug. (JS). **M.C.:** 8, St.Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Sedge Wren
M.C.: 30, e.e. McLean County, 24 Aug. (MR); 24, GLPSP, 29 May (JH). **Others:** Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (6 males), 30 May–24 July (AH); Roscoe (Winnebago Co) (3), June/July (WM); COLSP (4 males), 29 June (AS); Plum Creek F.P. (Cook Co) (3 males), 7 June (AS); Glenview (Cook Co) (2 males), 29 June (EW); Moraine Hills S.P. (McHenry Co) (5 males), 1 Aug. (SD, LK); Paxton (Ford Co) (7 in one field), 21 June (RC); s.e. Coles County (male), 6 July (BH); Carl.L (Fayette Co), 27 July (KM, DK) and (3), 7 Aug. (DK); Cypress Road (Madison Co), 19 June (DK).

Marsh Wren
M.C.: 8 (males), Chi (Powderhorn L.F.P.), 8 June (WM); 5, Chi (Egger's Woods F.P.), 8 June (WM). **Others:** Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co) (2 males), 20 July (JMD).

Golden-crowned Kinglet
LMSF (2 males), 20 June (MW).

Blue-gray Gnateatcher
Nesting: Saganashkee Slough (Cook Co) (nest), 1 June (CA). **M.C.:** 14, Palos (4 locations), 13–20 June (WS); 8, Mackinaw State F.W.A., 9 June (MF); 6, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 5, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF); 5 (territories) Lockport (Will Co), 15 & 30 June (JM). **Others:** MWF (4–5 prs.), May/July (RM); Libertyville (3 males), 11 June–9 July (SD); Joliet (3 territories), 13 June (JM).

Eastern Bluebird
Nesting: Palso F.P. (Cook Co) (2nd nesting), 21 May (EW); Homer (Champaign Co) (115 fledglings), May/August (JS). Excellent season in Winnebago County (DW). **M.C.:** 9, Jackson County, 17 July (KM). Full results of the 1997 breeding season will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Gems of Blue* published by the Illinois Bluebird Project.

Veery
GRCA (male), mid-June/July (MW); Rock Cut S.P. (Winnebago Co) (3), 4 June (DW); Marengo Ridge C.A. (McHenry Co) (pr.), 2 July (RBa); Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF); Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co) (4 = 2 males and an agitated pr.), 28–29 June (WM); Jurgensen Woods F.P. (Cook Co), 27 July (WM); LMSF (5 males), 8 July (DS); Mackinaw State F.W.A., 9 June (MF).

Wood Thrush
Nesting: Joliet (nest), 13 June (JM). **M.C.:** 10 (males), Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF, JMD); 7 (5 males), Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co), during June (WM).; 7, Joliet, 13 June (JM). **Others:** Rockford (2 males), 4 July (DW); LMSF (5 males), 21 June (JMD); Libertyville (2 males), 5 June–9 July (SD); s. Charleston (2 pr.), June (BH); Monroe/St. Clair counties (3), 22 June (KM).

American Robin
M.C.: 143, Champaign/Piatt counties, 5 June (RC); 79, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Gray Catbird
M.C.: 12, SAD, 17 June (JH, SR); 5, Oakwood Bottoms (Jackson Co), 17 July (KM).

Northern Mockingbird
Nesting: PRSNA (4 nests), April/July and (8 prs.), May/July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 18, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM). **Others:** Baileyville (Ogle Co), 28 June (DW); Midewin National Tall Grass Prairie (2 males), 15 May (EW).

Brown Thrasher nest. 31 May 1997. McHenry Co. Nest has three cowbird and two thrasher eggs. An additional thrasher egg was found punctured and out of the nest. Photo by Eric Walters.

Brown Thrasher
Nesting: PRSNA (29 nests), egg dates: 10 April–8 July (JW, EK); McHenry Co, 31 May. (nest) (EW). **M.C.:** 24, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

Cedar Waxwing
M.C.: 12, HL, 9 June (KM). **Others:** O'Fallon (St. Clair Co) (pr.), June/July (KM).

Loggerhead Shrike
Nesting: Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (7 nests), by 15 May (EW); Jackonsville (nest w/ fledglings), May/June (MW); s.w. Jasper County (15 territories), April/July (JW, EK); Bible Grove (Clay Co) (fledgling), 14 June (RC). **M.C.:** 4, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 4 (2 ad., 2 imm.), Carl.L (Bond Co), 7 Aug. (DK). **Others:** e. Henry County, 4 July (CMc, JMc); Evergreen L (e. Woodford Co) (pr. w/ 2 yg.), June/July (fide MF); Havana, 5 July (RC); Bird Township (Macoupin Co), 5 July (MP). **N.B.S.O.**: Chi (Montrose), 4 June (KHi fide EW).

European Starling
M.C.: 225, Wauk, 11 July (EW); 212, Clay County, 14 June (RC).

White-eyed Vireo
M.C.: 5, Oakwood Bottoms (Jackson Co), 17 July (KM); 3, Carl.L (Fayette Co), 27 July (DK). **Others:** Rockford, June/July (BG); Carl.L (2), 27 July (KM); Nachusa Grasslands (Ogle/Lee Cos), 6 July (DW); Homer (Champaign Co) (2 territories), June/July (JS).

Bell's Vireo
Nesting: GRCA (5+ prs., 2 nests), late May/July (MW); Mahomet (Champaign Co) (building), 15 June (RC); PRSNA (4 nests), May/June and (10 territories), May/July (JW, EK). **Others:** Rock Cut S.P. (Winnebago Co), June/July (DW); Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (2 males), 14 May–24 July (AH); DPCA (7 — 6 males), 20 June (JM); Banner Marsh (Peoria Co) (3 males), 23 June (MF, DBi); Newton L (Jasper Co) (2), June (ES); HL (3), 5 June (KM); Sauget (St. Clair Co) (3), 5 June (KM); Carl.L, 27 July (KM); Pulaski County, 3 July (KM).

Yellow-throated Vireo
Lockport (2 males), 15 June (JM); DPCA (2 males), 20 June (JM).

Warbling Vireo
Nesting: Wilmette (nest), 13 June (EW); Chi (Lincoln Park) (nest), 8 June (JL). **M.C.:** 12, HL, 9 June (KM). **Others:** Libertyville (3 males), 5 June–9 July (SD).

Red-eyed Vireo
M.C.: 23 (males), Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co), 1 June (WM); 18, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 15 June (CF); 15, Joliet, 13 June (JM). **Others**: Libertyville (3 males), 5 June–9 July (SD); Lockport (Will Co) (10), 15 June (JM); Mackinaw State F.W.A. (5), 9 June (MF); St. Morgan (Madison Co) (3), 9 June (KM); CONWR (3), 17 July (KM).

Blue-winged Warbler
Nesting: Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (nest successful), 5 June (AH). **Others:** MacDonald Woods (Lake Co) (male), 2–16 June (SH); Palos (John J.Duffy F.P.) (5), 1 June (CT); Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co) (5 = 3 males and an agitated pr.), 21 June (WM); LMSF (pr. + 3 males), 15 June (CMc, JMc); Oregon (Ogle Co) (2 males), 15 June (CMc, JMc).

'Brewster's Warbler'
LMSF (male singing Golden-winged song), 8 June (AS).

Northern Parula —
M.C.: 4, Pere Marquette S.P., 5 July (EW); 4, Pulaski County, 15 July (KM). **Others:** Shirland (Winnebago Co) (male), 29 June (BG); Palos (McClaughry Springs Woods), 24 June (CT); w. Grundy County (male), 14 June (CMc, JMc); Franklin Creek S.P. (Lee Co) (male), 25 June (MW); St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM)..

Yellow Warbler
M.C.: 10, DPCA, 20 June (JM); 5 (males), Libertyville, 5 June–9 July (SD).

Chestnut-sided Warbler
Shirland (Winnebago Co) (male), through July (BG, DW); Rock Cut S.P. (2 males), through July (BG); LMSF (2 males), 20 June (MW) and (male) 8 July (DS).

Black-throated Green Warbler
LMSF (8 = 7 males, 1 female), 8 July (DS). **N.B.S.O.:** Evanston (singing male), 4 July (EW).

Yellow-throated Warbler
LMSF (2 males), 20 June (MW) and 21 June (JMD); Winnebago County (6 males), June/July (BG); Palos (Swallow Cliff F.P.) (male), 15 June (WS) and 25 June (CT); s. Charleston (1 pr.), June (BH); Heron Pond N.P. (Johnson Co) (2), 15 July (KM).

Pine Warbler
SRSF (male on territory), 4 July (DB, BDy).

Prairie Warbler
Roscoe (Winnebago Co), late June (fide DW).

Cerulean Warbler
Shirland (Winnebago Co) (2), June/July (DW); Rock Cut S.P. (Winnebago Co) (3), June/July (DW); Fox Ridge S.P. (1–2 males), 4 July (BH); Pulaski County, 15 July (KM).

Black-and-white Warbler
Coral Woods (McHenry Co), 25 June (RBa).

American Redstart
M.C.: 8+ (males), Carl.L (Fayette Co), 27 July (DK); 4, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM); 3, Oregon (Ogle Co), 15 June (CMc, JMc); 3 (males), DPCA, 20 June (JM). **Others:** Cuba Marsh FP (Lake Co) (male), 11 June (CF); w. Grundy County (pr.), 14 June (CMc, JMc);

Prothonotary Warbler
Nesting: Pecatonica (Winnebago Co) (2 prs.), June/July (DW). **M.C.:** 6, Stump L (Jersey Co), 26 July (KM); 4, Chain-of-Rocks (Madison Co), 30 June (KM). **Others:** Shirland (Winnebago Co) (male), 9 June (BG); Heron Pond N.P. (Johnson Co), 15 July (KM).

Worm-eating Warbler
s. Charleston (1–2 pr.), June (BH).

Ovenbird
M.C.: 26, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 15 June (CF); 7 (males), Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co), 1 June (WM). **Others:** Libertyville (3 males), 5 June–9 July (SD); Joliet (3 = 2 males, 1 female), 13 June (JM); Lockport (Will Co) (5 = 4 males, 1 female), 15 June (JM); LMSF (3), 15 June (CMc, JMc) and (5), 8 July (DS); Mitchell's Grove (La Salle Co) (2), 22 June (CMc, JMc); s. Charleston (1 pr.), June (BH).

Louisiana Waterthrush
Rock Cut S.P. (male), through 2 June (BG); s. Charleston (2 pr.), June (BH).

Kentucky Warbler
Shirland (Winnebago Co) (male 1), 9 June and (male 2), June/July (BG); Rock Cut S.P. (Winnebago Co), 4 June (DW); Marengo Ridge C.A. (McHenry Co) (2), 9 July (RBa); Joliet (male), 13 June (JM); Jasper/Effingham counties (2 males), 10 June (RC); s. Charleston (1 pr.), June (BH).

Mourning Warbler
Shirland (Winnebago Co) (male), through 9 July (DW, BG); Old School F.P. (Lake Co) (male), 11 & 18 June (SD); Ryerson C.A. (Lake Co) (male), 15 June (SH); Grant South F.P. (Lake Co), 9 June (CF).

Common Yellowthroat
Nesting: PRSNA (7 nests), May/June (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 32, Jackson County, 17 July (KM); 19, Jasper/Effingham counties, 10 June (RC); 16, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

Hooded Warbler
Shirland (Winnebago Co) (male), June/July (BG); Rock Cut S.P. (2), June/July (BG); Ryerson C.A. (Lake Co) (male), 26 May–15 June (SH); Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co) (2 males), 7 June (CF, JMD); Palos (2), 14–15 June (WS).

Canada Warbler
Lockport (male, perhaps female as well), 15 June (JM).

Yellow-breated Chat
M.C.: 3, Oakwood Bottoms (Jackson Co), 17 July (KM). **Others:** Rock Cut S.P. (Winnebago Co), 4 June (DW); Lee County (pr.), June (MW); LMSF, 15 June (CMc, JMc); Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (male), 14 May–11 June (periodically) (AH); Lyon's Woods (Lake Co) (2 males), 20 June (SH); DPCA (2 males), 20 June (JM); Revis Prairie (Mason Co) (male), 22 June (MF).

Summer Tanager
Nesting: Ripley (Bond Co) (nest w/ yg), 25 June+ (CMa). **Others**: Palos (Swallow Cliff F.P.) (max: 3 = 2 males, 1 female), 15 June (WS); Mattieson S.P. (subad. male), 19 & 22 June (CMc, JMc); s. Charleston (1 pr.), June (BH); Fairmount (Vermilion Co) (male), June (JS); Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

Scarlet Tanager
M.C.: 7, Deer Grove West F.P. (Cook Co), 7 June (CF); 6 (3 males), Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co), 1 June (WM); 6, White Heath (Piatt Co), 22 June (RC). **Others:** Libertyville (2 males), 5 June–9 July (SD); Lockport (Will Co) (3 males), 15 June and (w/ fledged cowbird), 30 June (JM); Joliet (3 males), 13 June (JM); Mackinaw State F.W.A. (3 males), 9 June (MF).

Northern Cardinal
Nesting: PRSNA (5 nests), May/July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 55, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 55, Pulaski County, 10 June (VK); 37, Pope County, 11 June (VK); 36, Johnson County, 12 June (VK); 30, Richland/Wayne counties, 4 June (VK); 29, Clay County, 14 June (RC).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Nesting: Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co) (female building), 1 June (WM). **Others:** Carl.L (Clinton Co) (3), 27 July (DK); St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

Blue Grosbeak
M.C.: 6 (5 males), Clay County, 14 June (RC); 5, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM). **Others:** Rend L (Jefferson Co) (male feeding yg. at nest), 25 July (DK); HL, 18 June (KM).

Indigo Bunting
M.C.: 42, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 35, Pulaski County, 10 June (VK); 34, Pope County, 11 June (VK); 30, Johnson County, 12 June (VK); 28, Clay County, 14 June (RC); 22, White County, 5 June (VK).

Dickeissel
Nesting: PRSNA (178 nests), egg dates: 18 May–16 Aug. (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 100+, near Cisco & Allerton Park (Piatt Co), 22 June (RC); 30 pr., n.e. McLean County, June/July (MR); 43, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 24, s.e. Livingston County, 18 June (VK); 23, w.c. Adams County, 2 June (VK); 20, GLPSP, 6 July (DS); 20, White County, 5 June (VK). **Others:** Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (up to 5 males), 19 May–24 July (AH et al); DPCA (10), 20 June and GLPSP (8), 10 July (JM); Mattieson S.P. (pr. w/ food for yg.), 27 July (CMc, JMc).

Eastern Towhee
M.C.: 11 (4 males), Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co), during June (WM); 4, CONWR, 17 July (KM); 4, Oakwood Bottoms (Jackson Co), 17 July (KM). **Others:** Old School Forest Preserve (Lake Co) (2 males), 5 June–9 July (SD).

Chipping Sparrow
M.C.: 26, Piatt/McLean counties, 11 June (RC); 23 (males), Braidwood (Will Co), 19 May (EW); 9, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 7, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM). **Others:** Palatine (ad. feeding 2 yg.), 29 July–6 Aug. (CF).

Clay-colored Sparrow
Nesting: Rockton (3 males on territory), June/July (DW). **Others**: Plum Creek F.P. (Cook Co) (male), 7 June (AS).

Field Sparrow

Nesting: PRSNA (40 nests), egg dates: 29 April–28 June (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 65, SAD, 11 June (JH, SR); 21 (males), Braidwood (Will Co), 19 May (EW); 19, Jasper/Effingham counties, 10 June (RC); 12, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

Vesper Sparrow

Nesting: PRSNA (2 nests), May/August (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 45, Champaign/Piatt counties, 5 June (RC).

Lark Sparrow

M.C.: 44, SAD, 11 June (JH, SR). **Others:** GRCA (10+ prs., 8 nests), late May/July (MW); Nachusa Grassland (Lee Co) (pr.), 19 & 30 May (AH); n. Winnebago County (4 fledglings), 17 June (BG); Iroquois County C.A. (pr.), 14 June (CMc, JMc) and (w/ nesting materials), 28 June (AS); McCune Sand Prairie (Bureau Co) (9), 4 July (CMc, JMc); s.e. Coles County (nesting pr.), 6 July (BH).

Savannah Sparrow

M.C.: 28, Palatine, 23 June (CF); 8, Glenview (Cook Co), 29 June (EW); 8 (males), near Cisco & Allerton Park (Piatt Co), 22 June (RC). **Others:** Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (up to 4 males), 30 May–18 June (AH); Libertyville (3 males), 10 June–9 July (SD); GLPSP (male), 20 June (JM); PRSNA (2 prs.), May/June (JW, EK).

Grasshopper Sparrow

Nesting: PRSNA (30 nests), egg dates: 18 May–26 July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 204, SAD, 11 June (JH, SR); 18, Clay County, 14 June (RC); 18 (males), near Cisco & Allerton Park (Piatt Co), 22 June (RC); 17 (males), Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co), 30 May–24 July (AH); 26, GLPSP, 20 June (JM); 4, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM). **Others:** Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co) (ad. w/ food for yg.), 25 June (CF); Oregon (Ogle Co) (ad. w/ food for yg.), 15 June (CMc, JMc); Matthieson S.P. (ad. w/ food for yg.), 27 July (CMc, JMc).

Henslow's Sparow

M.C.: 50, Pope/Johnson counties, 13 June (JH); 37, GLPSP, 30 June (JH); 20 (males), PRSNA, May/July (JW, EK). **Others**: Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (2–3 males), 14 May–13 July (AH, m.ob.); Glacial Park (McHenry Co) (2–3 males), 11 June/ /17 Aug. (RBa); Plum Creek F.P. (Cook Co) (male), 7 June (AS); DPCA (3 males), 27 June (JH); Mitchell's Grove (La Salle Co) (male), 1 June (CMc, JMc); Banner Marsh (Peoria Co) (9 males), 23 June (MF, DBi); n.e. McLean County (2), 22 Aug. (MR); Diona (Coles/Cumberland Cos) (nesting—1st record for both counties), June (EB fide BH).

Song Sparrow

Nesting: PRSNA (9 nests), April/July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 47, Jasper/Effingham counties, 10 June (RC); 39, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM); 34, White County, 5 June (VK); 31, Hancock County, 13 June (VK).

Swamp Sparrow

Nesting: GRCA(20 prs.), May/July (MW). **M.C.:** 9 (8 ad., 1 fledgling), Chi (Powderhorn L. F.P.), 7 July (WM); 4 (males), Zander Woods F.P. (Cook Co), June/July (WM).

White-throated Sparrow

N.B.S.O.: Chi (male), 22 July (fide EW).

Bobolink

Nesting: Diona (Coles/Cumberland Cos) (nesting), June (EB fide BH). **M.C.:** 100, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (Will Co), 4 June (JH); 20+, GRCA, 6 & 24 June (JH, SR); 12 (males), rural La Salle County, June/July (DS); 8 (7 males), Glenview (Cook Co), 29 June (EW); 8, Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co), 6 July (DW). **Others:** Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (3 males & 1 female), 5 June–15 July (AH); Ogle County (6), 28 June (DW); Libertyville (2 males), 10 June–9 July (SD); Chi (Lincoln Park) (male), 21 June (JL); GLPSP (5), 9 July (JH, BGl); Saybrook (McLean Co) (3 pr.), 25 May (MR)..

Red-winged Blackbird

Nesting: PRSNA (450+ nests), April/August (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 316, Clay County, 14 June (RC).

Eastern Meadowlark

Nesting: PRSNA (84 nests), egg dates: 8 April–4 July (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 84, Clay County, 14 June (RC); 70, GLPSP, 10 June (JH, BGl); 49, DPCA, 20 June (JM); 40, Hancock County, 13 June (VK); 39, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM); 28, Palatine, 23 & 25 June (CF). **Others:** Evanston (rather unexpected summer location), 27 June (EW).

Western Meadowlark

M.C.: 150+, SAD, 11 & 17 June (JH, SR). **Others**: Moraine Hills S.P. (McHenry Co) , 28 May (RBa): Piatt/McLean counties (3), 11 June (RC).

Yellow-headed Blackbird

Nesting: Fulton (Whiteside Co) (4 males + female at nest), 9 June (AM); McHerny Dam (fledglings), 1 Aug. (SD, LK); LCal (7–11 nesting pairs — down from the 35 pairs of recent years) (JL) — yg. heard calling, 22 June (WM); Chi (Egger's Woods F.P.) (3 family groups = 1, 2, & 1 yg.), 6 July (WM). **Others**: DPRWDP (5 males), 27 June (SH).

Brewer's Blackbird

IBSP (pr.), 1 June (AS) thru mid June, then disappeared (fide AS).

Common Grackle

M.C.: 177, Champaign/Piatt counties, 5 June (RC).

Brown-headed Cowbird

50, HL, 8 July (KM).

Orchard Oriole

Nesting: Nachusa Grasslands (Lee Co) (pr.), 19 May–24 July and (feeding yg.), 26 June (AH); LChau (nest w/ yg.), 5 July (RC); Fairmount (Vermilion Co) (2 nests), June/July (JS); Homer L (Champaign Co) (nest w/ 4 yg.), 6 July (RC). **M.C.:** 14, near Cisco & Allerton Park (Piatt Co), 22 June (RC); 7, DPCA, 20 June (JM); 4, Roscoe (Winnebago Co), June/July (DW); 3 (ad.), Lockport (Will Co), 30 June (JM); 3, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM). **Others:** Half Day Preserve (Lake Co) (male), 6 July (SH); MWF (2 prs.), May/June (RM); GLPSP, 10 June (JM); LMSF (subad. male), 21 June (JMD); CBG (pr.), 23 July (CF).

Baltimore Oriole

Nesting: Wilmette (Gilson Park) (3 nests), 13–15 June (EW); Chi (Montrose) (building), 4 June (JPo, EW). **M.C.:**: 8, Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co), 25 June (CF); 5, Monroe/St. Clair counties, 22 June (KM).

House Finch

Nesting: Wilmette (building), 21 May (EW). **Others**: Homer (Champaign Co) (60 at feeders), June/July (JS).

Red Crossbill

N.B.S.O.: SRSF (pr. at feeder), thru 2 June (RBj).

American Goldfinch

Nesting: PRSNA (5 nests), August (JW, EK). **M.C.:** 10, St. Morgan (Madison Co), 9 June (KM).

House Sparrow

M.C.: 300, Jasper/Effingham counties, 10 June (RC).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow

M.C.: 8, RLCA, 28 July (RC).

Exotics:

Eurasian Collared–Dove (or) Ringed Turtle–Dove – Chi, 3 July (EW); Urbana, June/July (RC et al.).

Monk Parakeet – Deer Grove East F.P. (Cook Co), 25 June (CF).

CORRIGENDA

1996 Breeding season notes in Meadowlark, Vol 6 No. 1:

Cooper's Hawk listing on page 31 should have been Red–shouldered Hawk. Observers: Cynthia and John McKee. Note that Red–shouldered Hawk is a state–endangered species, and Cooper's Hawk has been delisted.

Osprey — record should be: Bergman (rather than Burgmann) Slough, nest building began as early as 20 June (rather than mid–July), and primary credit should be CT (rather than JPh).

Primary credit for the following records should be JW, EK (Jeff Walk and Eric Kirshner) (rather than SS):American Bittern nest, 1 July; Least Bittern at Kinmundy, 29 July; Little Blue Heron at Bogota, 27 May & 11 June; Northern Harrier nests at PCS, May/June; Greater Prairie–Chicken broods, June/July; King Rail broods, June/July; Upland Sandpiper at PCS, May/June; Bell's Vireo at PCS, 4 May–28 June; Blue Grosbeak at PCS, May/June; Dickcissel nests at PCS, May/July; Field Sparrow nests at PCS, May/July and M.C. of 85 (pr) at PCS, May/July; Savannah Sparrow at PCS, May/July;

Grasshopper Sparrow nests at PCS and M.C. of 90 (pr.) at PCS, May/July; Henslow's Sparrow at PCS (41 pr.), May/July; Eastern Meadowlark nests at PCS May/July and M.C. 175 (pr.) at PCS, May/July.

Also, Loggerhead Shrike at Bogota (12 territories) May/July should be JW (rather than SS, EK).

— Vernon M. Kleen
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